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*John Leifchild, His Public
Ministry, Private Usefulness, ...*

John R. Leifchild

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A MEMOIR
OF THE
REV. DR. LEIFCHILD.



JOHN LEITCH, D.D.

His Life and Works.

Personal Characteristics.

FOUNDED UPON AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

J. R. LEITCH, A.M.



NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY
J. R. LEITCH, 100 N. 3RD ST., N.Y.C.

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F. Leifchild

JOHN LEIFCHILD, D.D.

His Public Ministry, Private Usefulness,

AND

Personal Characteristics.

FOUNDED UPON AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

BY

J. R. LEIFCHILD, A.M.



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PREFACE.

THE author's principal object in preparing the present volume has been to show how great a blessing, under divine direction, one man may be rendered to his generation, and perhaps beyond it. One man, of no original advantages of birth, and but few of education. One man who, while in a religious sense he owed everything to God—in another sense, owed everything to himself. The faithful record of such a life may quicken hope and encourage imitation in the breast of thousands of readers. To thousands, and for many years, did the subject of this Memoir address words of instruction while living; to thousands may he, being dead, yet speak, through these simple memorials of his holy and useful life.

To attain the principal object more certainly, a secondary purpose has been to divest this volume of any undue proportion of what is merely denominational and purely sermonic. Although, indeed, the best hours and the best abilities of the deceased minister were given to his sermons, and to theological disquisi-

tions, yet these would be less welcome to the readers of a memoir than the details of ordinary life. In such a volume as the present, readers will doubtless wish to contemplate the man as well as the minister. Therefore the writer has endeavoured to delineate his father in those aspects in which the public would most desire to study his character. His own record of his early life displays him as a religious youth labouring in the common levels of life, but striving up to a noble maturity. Afterwards, he is delineated as a man in the most interesting relations of manhood, and as a preacher in the principal relations of a long and remarkably successful ministry; moreover, also, as a man of powerful mind, in its relation to others, to God, and to its own development.

These are aspects which will interest all, without reference to particular creed or church. Such a man as the departed was sent to this earth not so much for his denomination as for his generation. While to the one he was an ornament, to the other he was a burning and shining light.

With reference to the autobiographical notes left by the deceased, they have been introduced and interwoven with the narrative wherever practicable. Not one has been omitted that could be employed; but it must be confessed that they were often fragmentary, and sometimes intractable. Hence it has been difficult to arrange them in orderly sequence, and to adapt them to constructive symmetry. It should also be known, that they

were written when age had stolen upon the penman, and when the fires of intellect burned low. They are therefore to be accepted as plain and unpretending notes. Bright colouring fades from the horizon of age, and in the cold, grey shadows of the evening of life it is enough if we can identify personality.

In depicting my father during his public period, I have endeavoured to group around him many details of time and place which would bring him vividly before the reader. With the view, likewise, of imparting variety to the records of one life, I have introduced several subsidiary personages. If these are often unimportant in themselves, nevertheless they become important in their relation to him. His influence upon his friends, hearers, and acquaintances, and reciprocally their influence upon him, constitute an integral portion of his ministerial life, and oftentimes there is no better method of knowing what he was than sketching them as they were. Some such sketches, indeed, he himself made, and they appear in the following pages. Others have been added to complete the several groups, and sometimes with lighter pencilling than his own.

The analysis of his mental characteristics and opinions will, probably, make the deceased more completely known than he ever was before, except to a limited circle. In this chapter, as well as in others, I may not have spoken with all the coolness of a critic, yet I trust I have not been too strongly influenced by the natural bias of a son.

Occasional personal allusions to myself must be pardoned, as they could not have been excluded, and some of them came from me as I was borne along by the fresh and fast current of sorrowful emotion.

Lest the susceptibilities of any living relative or friend should be affected, it has been thought prudent to withhold the names of many persons referred to in the course of the following pages. Suffice it to say, that in every instance names, dates, and other verifying circumstances might have been added.

LONDON, *March*, 1863.

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MEMOIR OF DR. LEIFCHILD,

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CHAPTER I.

His Birth, Parentage, and Early Years.

THERE is a period in human life in which extremes meet—the period of old age, when the man of many years looks fondly back to the time when his years were few. It is a remarkable characteristic of old age, that one who may have passed through long years of publicity, and through a perpetual round of important engagements and prominent appearances, will at last turn with warmest thoughts, not to the more recent of his public activities and acknowledged successes; not to note and describe what he felt when he was “the observed of all observers,”—when a thousand hearers hung upon his lips, and by his thrilling appeals were energised for highest efforts or for hardest endurance; but rather to that remote era when as yet he was nothing to other men—when life was just opening before him—and when his conceptions far outran his few and brief experiences. So is this as if an aged tree should at once forget all its ample honours of far-spreading branches and thick foliage, its numerous successive seasons of flushing beauty and increasing growth, and mark only its undeveloped microcosm in the little seed in which all that now grandly outspreads itself, once lay narrowly imprisoned and mysteriously enfolded.

Such was the habit of Dr. Leifchild in his green old age. With peculiar zest and chastened enjoyment he would continually refer to the particular circumstances of his own early life, and the marked peculiarities of his father's life and character. The great and eventful interval between his youth and his age appeared to have receded from view; and the simple pictures which time might have been supposed to render faint or to efface, stood out before him in their strong outline, retouched by a feeble hand, recoloured by a failing memory—a memory failing in many things, but not in them—a memory that reached fondly and firmly back into the past, and there rooted itself with a most tenacious hold. It is on this account that the autobiographical records which the deceased left behind him are minute and particular with reference to his early years, and more partial and fragmentary in relation to several succeeding years. It is on this account, also, that my father speaks of himself nearly continuously in the period first named, and that his son is compelled to take up and retain the pen in periods when he had hoped that his father would have fully recorded comparatively great movements and great impressions, and have been his own best biographer.

Without further introductory comment, Dr. Leifchild shall now begin at his own beginning. The few interpolated passages in this portion of the volume are essential to its right understanding and to its proper connexion. Others, in more advanced pages, record events or impressions which my father has frequently detailed in conversation, but has omitted to notice in his manuscript.

“This account of my life is written chiefly with a view to trace the good hand of God upon me from the earliest periods of my recollection, through a long course of years, and a somewhat rich and varied experience of His goodness. I shall minute down things as they really happened, to the best of my recollec-

tion, and the feelings associated with them; also the reflections that arise out of them, as they come again to my view through the vista of past years.

"I was born at Barnet, in Hertfordshire, on February 15th, 1780. My father had married a Miss Bockman, the daughter of an artist of that name, who was the painter of some pictures now preserved in one of the rooms at Hampton Court Palace earliest inspected by the visitor. My mother had been too genteelly brought up to be altogether a suitable help-meet for one in my father's station of life. This incongruity produced numerous little uneasinesses, my father's temperament being highly sanguine while hers was rather saturnine; she always looking too much to the dark, he too much to the bright side of things. From this cause arose differences of opinion on many subjects, which pained the children to witness, and from which we learned the great importance of being 'equally yoked.' Nevertheless, the religion of both preserved things in order in the main, and my father's cheerful temperament rendered the course of life tolerably smooth. He was a Wesleyan Methodist, while my mother rather leaned to Calvinistic views, having with her sister often attended the ministry of the once popular Calvinist, Mr. Romaine.

"I was the elder of two sons, and younger than our three sisters. When sufficiently old, I went to school at Wood Street, in Barnet, where, in consequence of my steadier habits and my reputed Methodistic family, I was not a little persecuted by the other boys. I never went to any theatre or similar public entertainment. I never knew a playing-card in my life; and I never played at any game of hazard, unless, perhaps, in the few games of childhood. From my earliest days I was fond of reading and of musing. My recollections carry me back to a very early period, when I was boyishly spouting, indulging in poetic fancies, and repeating to myself fabulous stories. Unfortunately my education was slender. I learnt no language but

my own, and that not very perfectly. Neither in arithmetic* nor in any other school attainment did I excel—not, as I felt, for want of capacity, but want of application, and of a sense of the value of such pursuits. My mind, I think, was a strong soil, but left too much to its own power and produce. I apprehend that the acquisition of different languages would not have been difficult to me; yet I obtained most knowledge from conversation with my father, who ever delighted to impart from his own varied stores to his children. He also put proper books into my hands; and from him, probably, I inherited an ardent love for reading, and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge.

“Although my reading became very miscellaneous, and my young imagination was fed with works of a romantic character, and poetry of an exciting kind, I can well remember that I thus early entertained sentiments of a somewhat unusual character for my age. The rich scenery of the earth, and the brilliant aspect of the heavens as they nightly attracted my wondering view, filled me with the most delightful though undefined emotions, and gilded all nature with a glory which youth only beholds. How true is the sentiment, that when youth is past ‘a glory has left the earth, never to return.’

“My religious impressions during this period, being the effect principally of early training and pious example, were neither deep nor permanent. They partook too much of the character of the ‘morning cloud and early dew, which passeth away.’ But I dare not say there were no strivings of the Spirit of God with me. Indeed, some minor incidents of the time point to such sacred influence. I well remember that on one occasion, while we sat at the dinner-table, my mother was in danger of choking

* He once narrated to me his confusion on being called upon, in the presence of an eminent public man, who was aiding him in collecting money for a benevolent purpose, to perform a sum in arithmetic. In truth he had an aversion to figures, and to the end of his life was reluctant to dwell upon them.

by a fish-bone. She began to look black in the face, when I ran affrighted to a loft in an adjoining yard, and bowed my little knees in earnest prayer for her relief. Great was the confidence I felt in her safety, and this was justified by my mother's ease on my return. No one at table surmised the cause of my absence; and although it was a child's act and a child's feeling of relief, I have not forgotten it at the close of life.

"About this time Mr. Wesley, whose rising fame was great amongst religious people, came to preach at the little chapel in this town. Upon arriving at Barnet, he drove to my father's house, as that of the principal Methodist in the place. When the door of his carriage was opened, he came out arrayed in his canonicals. Child-like I ran to lay hold of him, but my father pulled me back; upon which, extending his hand, he exclaimed, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' I was struck with his accommodation of these words of our blessed Lord to the man himself, even though his limited application of them was perhaps proper enough; yet from not having been accustomed to such accommodation, the act appeared to me to border upon presumption. Even at that early age of seven years, my reverence for the Saviour greatly exceeded that for any mortal being of whom I had any conception. Soon afterwards, Mr. Wesley preached at the chapel. Child-like I thought it the best sermon I had ever heard, merely for one circumstance—it was only a quarter of an hour long.

"I remember being particularly struck with the personal neatness of the preacher as he came out of his carriage. His coachman also attracted my notice, for he seemed to be his master's *valet de chambre*, his clerk when necessary, and his deputy, to converse and even argue with people. I heard that on one occasion an individual, who was one of the class of captious questioners, addressed himself to Mr. Wesley with an

air of impertinent curiosity. The preacher had no time to spare, and furthermore felt it necessary to check annoyances of this kind for the future. He therefore gravely asked his questioner, 'Can you read Greek?' 'No, Sir, I cannot,' was the reply. 'O then,' rejoined Mr. Wesley, 'my coachman will be able to satisfy you.'

"My father suffered much for his attachment to the Methodist cause at this place. The townspeople were irreligious; the Wesleyan interest in the town was in a poor condition; and my father, on his own part, was too attentive to other books than his account-books to advance himself as a tradesman. Not only did he suffer from his espousal of a poor and unpopular cause, but he further suffered from the very people whose cause he espoused. Some supercilious and pragmatical persons, envying my father's mental superiority, took every opportunity of thwarting him; and at my early age these instances of mean and vindictive conduct made a very unfavourable impression upon me, which I foolishly extended to religious people in general. I and the rest of our family were surprised and rather mortified at my father's equanimity under this conduct, and his continued zeal and unabated attachment to Methodism, yea, deep devotedness to it, persecuted as he was from without, and incessantly harassed by the jealousies, hauteur, and petty annoyances of the few upstarts I have alluded to. When, however, these died away, he lived to retain many friends, and to forget his persecutors.

"When I was about eight years old, I was visited with the small-pox to a fearful degree. My body was ulcerated all over, and I lay breathless and almost speechless for many hours. Blindness was produced for a time, delirium ensued, and my life was pronounced to be in extreme peril. I remember overhearing the doctor say I must have a blister, or I should rise no more. My hands were tied, that I might not tear my flesh; no one expected me to recover, and my return to health was a joyful surprise to my whole family. With what joy did I then renew my boyish

pastimes, and how well do the following lines express my feelings at that time !

' See the wretch who long has toss'd
On the thorny bed of pain,
At once regain his vigour lost—
And breathe and walk again !
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common air, the earth, the sky,
To him are opening melody !'

"The master of the Grammar School in Wood Street, to which I was sent when I was about nine years old, was an austere man. I have a clearer recollection of his gown than of his face, for I seldom dared to look as high as that. My condition was little improved in this respect when I was placed under another pedagogue, higher up in the same street. Several of the school-boys were of the humbler class of society, and their habits were vulgar and vicious. Even the master himself suffered from them ; they fastened pins under his chair, and contrived by a string to move them to his person when he fell asleep upon his desk in the afternoon. As I did not join them in these tricks, I was suspected of being an informer, and one of the bigger boys challenged me to fight him upon his knees. I was obliged to accept the challenge, and my antagonist concealed a sharp stone in his fist, and with it smote me on the thigh. I was thus laid up for some weeks, and was considered to be injured for life. When this dastardly trick became known, my opponent endured a severe flogging from the master—so severe was this flogging, that the boy's mother exposed its marks to an assembled mob of the lowest class of persons before my father's house, who were with difficulty restrained from outrage and violence.

"It will easily be supposed that I did not much regret a speedy removal from this school, and employment in various little matters in which I could assist my father and his workmen in their business. The company of the men and boys in the shop,

and of others about my own age whom I met in the streets, did not much minister to my refinement or improvement; and my wonder now is, that I so completely escaped from the influence of their bad habits and low conversation. I attribute this escape in a great measure to the elevating influence of my father's character. I loved and venerated him, and the different amusements in which he indulged me, as playing on instruments and music, drawing and painting, and above all the perusal of books of a better class than was usual at that period, prevented my leisure from becoming burdensome, and the companionship of inferior persons from being eagerly sought. Thus, too, a consciousness of superiority to such persons was generated, and continued to influence me through life.

“When about eleven or twelve years of age, I worked at my father's trade, but with little steadfastness and proficiency. How could I, when I stole away as often as possible with a book in my pocket, in order to peruse its contents? My imagination was heated by the works of Richardson and other novelists, while my judgment was unformed. My father continued to place before us all religious books and works on history, in which he was well versed; yet he was too easy in temper, and our young minds were too little restrained, to attend implicitly to his directions. When I reflect that the whole of his family have been converted to God, I am induced to conclude that the gentle side ought to be leaned to, and that much is to be expected from good example and private prayer in the conduct of children.

“On Sabbath days I frequently repaired to the village of Whetstone, which lies two miles nearer to London, and attended a Calvinistic Chapel, instead of the Wesleyan one at Barnet. Mr. Mathews, a bookseller in the Strand, London, and father of the celebrated comedian, was the usual preacher; and a very sensible and impressive one I thought him to be, although he was not impassioned. The order of the service pleased me, and I

liked the singing, the gown and bands on the preacher, and his tone of voice and manner. I need not be ashamed to confess that, added to the above, were other and more questionable inducements. A young female, to whom, although so young, I felt secretly attached, also attended at this chapel from Barnet, with her friends. That young person, then respectable and much beloved by her friends, married a fashionable tradesman in London, who ultimately brought her to beggary. How strange the reverses of life! She to whom I had feared to address myself in my boyhood, solicited relief from me, after having been my hearer in later life.

“Whenever I walked home to Barnet alone, after having attended this chapel, I repeated to myself the sermon I had heard, and fancied how much I should like to be a preacher; and by the combination of the various influences on my character, to which I have alluded, I grew up to be thoughtful and sedate. My fondness for reading and musing, and my acquired skill in playing upon some instruments of music (the flute and the bass viol), preserved me from many deteriorating influences. The result was that I never, so far as I now recollect, went to any theatrical entertainment, never swore a profane oath, never played a game of cards, and continued to the last ignorant of cards, and all games, except those of the most innocent kind, appertaining to childhood and youth. Being otherwise sufficiently entertained, I did not feel the need of them. I cannot help thinking that by this happy ignorance I was throughout life kept from scenes of dissipation and places of hazardous excitement.

“While reflecting upon this period of my life, I have a vivid recollection of many instances of escape from impending danger, and even death. When about fourteen years of age, I was thrown out of a light vehicle, while riding with my father near Totteridge. Again, I was thrown into a ditch near Tottenham, when with my brother; and a third time when with a journeyman of my father’s, on a common at Northaw. Yet through mercy I

escaped in all cases unhurt. On another occasion, when riding in a slight vehicle, which was heavily laden, down Barnet-hill, on the road to London, a loud voice shouted 'Stop, stop;' we obeyed, and then it was found that the wheel on the side where I was sitting was within an inch of falling off. The man who had greased it before our setting out had forgotten to put in the linch-pin. That I had gone so far and escaped so opportunely who could ascribe to chance? It was the expressed opinion of the bystanders that had the wheel gone off, which it might have done at any moment, I should have been instantly crushed to death by the weight of the vehicle falling upon me."

Here may be introduced an account of an escape from another kind of danger, which was often circumstantially narrated to me by the deceased, and which I give from recollection:—

At the time we are adverting to, Finchley Common, now so safe and simply rural, was indeed a wild place, and of evil report as respected the traveller's safety at dusk. One evening my grandfather was returning from London to Barnet, accompanied by my father, then a mere lad, in his own vehicle, and was driving as quickly as a jaded steed could bear him over the loneliest part of the Common. Not unmindful of its evil report, and not unwilling to raise his courage by a hymn, he proposed to my father to sing: "Child," said he, "let us sing Ottford;" before the first strain of that tune could be raised, an unmusical voice suddenly thundered in his ear "STOP!" and an outstretched arm directed a pistol to my grandfather's head. "Quick with your money!" cried the highwayman. At that moment another vehicle was heard close behind, and came up almost before the robber could ride off. "There, child," said my grandfather, "God has appeared for us; now let us sing Ottford," and Ottford was gratefully sung and repeated, even though it was pitched a little too high, until they entered Barnet.

When I recently visited Barnet by the Great Northern Railway, and saw every acre of ground cultivated, and every plot of

building sites occupied, to the exclusion of all waste and solitary places, it seemed strange to me, that highwaymen were the terror of travellers, even within my father's recollection. He narrated the capture of one whom he had known as a fine young man, and as once respectable, to the following effect:—

Carver, for that was his name, had unhappily been induced to gamble; and in order to find money for his young wife and children he, in an evil hour, dared to take to the road. His first attempt was also his last. A mile or two out of Barnet he suddenly stopped and accosted two ladies in a travelling equipage. "Ladies," said he, "I need, and must have, your money. Do not be alarmed, I shall not injure a hair of your heads. Only give me your purses, and your watches, and your jewels." These the ladies immediately surrendered; but so unhardened was the robber, that he returned the watches, and respectfully inclining to the ladies, bade the coachman drive on.

Confused as Carver was in this his first attack, he foolishly rode on towards Barnet,—the very direction in which the carriage he had stopped was proceeding,—and in so doing passed another carriage, containing some relatives of the plundered ladies. Intelligence was soon conveyed from carriage to carriage, and the driver of the foremost arranged to take out one of the carriage horses and ride at full speed after Carver, whom he soon approached, and then never lost sight of him until he reached the town; upon entering which he raised the cry, "Stop thief!" Instantly a crowd scrambled after Carver, who to escape rode up a side-street, which, however, proved to be no thoroughfare. He was soon taken, and it so happened that my grandfather was then chief constable, so that my father had an opportunity of seeing Carver brought in. The dejected look of the captive, his exclamations of grief for his family, the trial before the local justice, the committal, and his subsequent transportation, were all engraven on my father's memory, and reproduced in the winter evenings of the winter of his life.

There was, also, an addition to this story of a highwayman upon Finchley Common. My grandfather being chief constable, had to keep the prisoner in custody until he was taken before the magistrates and committed to Hertford Gaol. "The pistols," said my father, "bullets, and bullet-moulds, together with the powder, all found upon his person, were deposited at our house. I attempted to cast bullets in the same mould, and on putting one into my mouth, in order to bite off the rough edges, it passed almost insensibly into my stomach. I soon, however, felt great pain. The surgeon who was sent for upbraided me with my folly, and warned me that my life was in danger. Happily I recovered." Thus he had two causes for thankfulness: one that he did not die by a bullet on the road, and the other that he did not die by a bullet at home.

"Thus passed away," continues my father, "the seed-time and juvenile period of my existence. I was scarcely sixteen years of age, had a warm imagination, and was buoyant with undefined hopes of the future. I had a consciousness of being born to something better than the drudgery of trade, if not a presentiment that something better awaited me. Not that I had any distinct foreshadowing of what was to come; but I think I can now perceive that a cast of character was then given to me which had reference to my future destiny. My intellectual store was not scanty, though very confused and disordered. My memory was most tenacious, and my mind, like my father's, in its proportion and degree, was for intermeddling with all kinds of knowledge. I had amassed a store of hymns in my memory, chiefly those of Charles Wesley, which have often served as the vehicle for the expression of my devoutest feelings, and have been quoted by me too often, perhaps, in my public discourses.

"I was preserved from the common indiscretions of youth, and from its levities; and if not the subject of deep religious feelings and convictions, the soil of my nature held the seeds of piety which were then sown, and which were afterwards to germinate,

and to grow into those principles of holiness which were to govern my life."

He was now about to quit his father's house, and this seems to be the most appropriate opportunity to bestow a glance on that good parent. He was a remarkable compound of exalted piety, childlike simplicity, and facile credulity. An unwavering Wesleyan; one who had himself entertained John Wesley under his roof as though he were an archbishop, and who thenceforth regarded his house as consecrated; himself a preacher of no mean pulpit power; a constant singer of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs; an honest tradesman, though not successful in making the tide of business which once flowed in upon him carry him onwards to fortune; a man of acknowledged high character, and undoubted probity;—all these was Mr. John Leifchild, senior, of Barnet, Herts, and judging from a pamphlet which he published on brewing, one might suppose him to be an unimaginative, practical man.

Nevertheless, sundry reminiscences indicate the contrary. He believed in all John Wesley's ghost-stories, and in the spirit-origin of all the odd noises which the founder of Methodism described with much detail as disturbing the peace of the Wesley family.

My grandfather always expected to see a spirit from the regions beyond the grave, nor did he dread, but rather coveted, such an interview. On one occasion, after having preached at a distance from home, on the text, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water," he found upon his return, on a dark Sunday night, a considerable part of the road completely overflowed, and the waters rising higher and higher. At first he drew back, but recollecting the text from which he had been preaching, he chid himself for his unbelief, and boldly committed himself to the waters. He was borne along safely, but in what manner he could never determine. He declared that he was filled with divine peace and satisfaction of mind, and to his astonishment he found himself, after some considerable time, safe

on the other side. Even on his death-bed he retained a recollection of the peace he then enjoyed.

Several testimonies were borne to his consistent and useful life in the town where he resided for upwards of thirty years. He hated no one, many loved him, and some were indebted to him for spiritual benefit. He was meek in temper, sensitive to tender appeals, merciful as a master, modest as a man, child-like throughout his days, and saint-like in his death. He lived principally for his family, and never were children more beloved by a father;* never was a father more beloved by his children.

His life was one that Innocence might claim.
No trivial truth is this—the man was just,
Though undistinguished by applauding Fame,
Still Virtue wept while bending o'er his dust.

Men knew him not; but in the life he gave
Came back his own, far mightier, yet as mild;
The sire grew famous by the son,—his grave
Was gilded with the glory of his child.

Reverting to the autobiographical notes of my father, we come to his account of his removal in the seventeenth year of his age:—

“In 1797 I removed from my father's house, and entered upon a new epoch of my life in the town of St. Alban's,—about the same distance from Barnet as the latter is from the metropolis. I went there to perfect myself in my business; but God's object in sending me thither was to complete the foundation of my religious character. My entire feelings were different from what they had ever been before, for I was now put upon my own resources. I was indeed a resident with relatives, and this

* In a letter to his son at Kensington he says: “I could be quite resigned to quit this troublesome world, could I, previous to that event, see all my family converted.” Again, “If any thing can add to my felicity in heaven, it will be the assurance of meeting all my children in the same place.”

took off from the feeling of isolation and of irksomeness in labour.

“After my week’s work, I strictly observed the Sabbath, and was regularly in the Abbey Church on the Sunday morning, where I was pleased with the impressive and eloquent discourses of the Rev. Samuel Nicholson. I often repeated his sermons in private, and endeavoured to imitate his almost matchless elocution. In the evenings I attended at the little Methodist Chapel, near the north end of the Abbey; and, occasionally, at the Independent meeting in Sweetbriar-lane.

“Although of a lively turn, my manners were serious, and my outward conduct did not belie my religious feelings. By worldly people I was esteemed religious, and by religious people was considered one of their number; but, as yet, I knew not the grace of God in truth. However near I was to the kingdom of God, I had not entered therein. What I at this time needed, was some judicious friend to urge me forward, and for want of this, how many religious youths remain with half-formed characters all their days! But God mercifully supplied me soon with this help and incitement.

“On the evening of a week day, I went to a prayer meeting at the Wesleyan Chapel. Few of the persons who usually took part in the service were present, and the minister resident in the town, knowing my father and myself from my frequent attendance, called upon me to take a part. I was surprised and confounded, for though I had often repeated discourses of my own composing, as well as those which I had heard from others, during my journeys on business, in lonely or private places; and though I even repeated imaginary prayers, one of which I had recited that very day, the suddenness and unexpectedness of the call abashed and confused me. In vain, however, did I object; the hymn-book was put into my hands, and I opened at some lines which exactly expressed what my feelings should have been. I was affected as I gave out these words:—

'O, that I could my Lord receive
Who did the world redeem,
Who gave His life that I might live
A life concealed in Him.

'O, that I could the blessing prove
My heart's extreme desire,
Live happy in my Saviour's love,
And in His arms expire.'

"I was affected to tears, and the prayer that followed was most earnest and pathetic, in which I have no doubt I was helped by the expressions and hearty 'Amens' of those around me.

"I went home, and retired to my chamber. There I reflected on what had passed, and felt that I had entered upon a course which must be pursued, or I should be counted a deceiver and hypocrite. I fell on my knees; my mouth was opened, my heart was enlarged. Never shall I forget that chamber, that spot, that prayer! I believe that all the petitions I then uttered were subsequently fulfilled in my experience. There was but little change outwardly—there could not be much—but from that time, the inner man was a different being. It seemed as if unshaped and partially dormant feelings had assumed their proper forms, and arrived at a vigorous maturity. During the several following months I met with some striking outward coincidences with the workings of my mind on particular topics. Passages upon which I alighted in books, sermons that I heard, and conversations addressed to me, appeared exactly adapted to the state of my mind at the moment. This might be owing to my own application of them, but it confirmed me in the convictions that God was with me. Individuals of different denominations, as if suddenly prompted to do so, would be asking me, while I was thinking of it, why I did not openly join myself to some religious society. So also did the minister of the Wesleyan Chapel, one Sunday morning, in the aisle of the Abbey. I then decided to cast in my lot amongst those people.

"At St. Alban's I became acquainted with a young female who

visited my aunt, and our acquaintance soon ripened into a mutual attachment. She was piously inclined, and we attended together the different places of worship on the Sabbath days. By her society, and by a circle of pious acquaintances, I was restrained from youthful indiscretion."

To this female he was afterwards married, but lost her in her first confinement after his removal to London. "I was stunned," he says, "by the blow."

Reverting to St. Alban's, he now observes:—

"At this time I was induced by my employer, who defrayed all the expenses, to belong to a volunteer corps, composed of the young gentlemen and tradesmen of the town. It was formed to assist in repelling the then expected invasion of the French, and I took a leading part as a musician in the band. The associations into which this threw me did not destroy my religious principles, but their progress was retarded. The persecutions I suffered from my companions had no other effect than to make me conceal my convictions, or interrupt my religious habits.

"On one occasion, I was much annoyed by the men employed in a large brewery at St. Alban's, which I had engaged to superintend. They were provoked by the opposition of my conduct and language to their irregular and immoral behaviour. On one occasion they followed me, at the close of the day, to my lodgings, with a rabble they had gathered, shouting, and loading me with opprobrious epithets. I never felt less inquietude.

"On a subsequent occasion, in the hay season, when all the hay had been got in, and they had nearly finished the rick in an adjoining meadow, the master requested me to go to the summit, and assist the men in treading it down. On reaching the place, I found the men on all sides quitting the spot and descending, leaving me alone; and being plentifully supplied with drink, they removed the ladders, and stood with pitchforks in their hands, menacing me with death if I dared to descend. They then poured forth a volley of abuse and execrations, the

master himself standing by and negatively encouraging them; for to him I had made my presence disagreeable, by my unbending integrity. I retained my composure, and remonstrated with them as mildly as was in my power, which, however, but enraged them the more.

"At length the nephew of the master, who was employed in the office, and was favourably impressed towards me, explained to his uncle that he thought matters had gone far enough, and that if the persecution was not stopped, he should withdraw, lest he should be called to account for his share in any consequences that might follow. He ordered the men to place a ladder conveniently for me, and called upon me to come down, declaring that any man who molested me should be dismissed. They obeyed, but looked at me threateningly all the while.

"By degrees this animosity subsided. The master behaved to me more respectfully, and the nephew was induced to attend the same place of worship with myself. I now continued to advance in the good opinion of all, until I left to go into business for myself."

On October 2nd, 1858, Dr. Leifchild revisited St. Alban's in company with his son, and then pointed out to him the various localities in which he had been personally interested about sixty years before. Unknown to any inhabitant of that town, a remarkable visit was then paid to it. An old man, whom Heaven had raised up to bless thousands—a man whom thousands respected—nay revered, was that day reviewing the retired spots, the dull streets, the dreary old houses, where, sixty years ago, he moved about an obscure and noteless lad.

First, we repaired to the old cooper's house, behind a newly-built Corn Exchange, where my father had wrought for about three years—that is, from 15 to 17 years of age. No one then resident in the vicinity remembered him or his name. We questioned one or two old people, but they were dull and "hard of hearing." Thence we went to Hollywell Hill, where he pointed

out the position which his aunt's house formerly occupied. We visited the Abbey, in which the old man, when young, had worshipped every Sunday morning for three years. Again he inspected the well-remembered curiosities in the ancient sanctuary. "Duke Humphrey's bones;" the old painted wooden ceiling; the particular pillar, and the standing-place where the voice vibrates so curiously; the cloisters in which he had one night, to his terrible alarm, seen a supposed ghost—the said ghost turning out in the morning to be a dash of whitewash on a dark wall; the Abbey orchard, where he was wont as a lad to play; and close to the Abbey, the house where his first wife lived—with the door in the garden-wall through which she used to admit him—in order that he might walk and talk with her in the evening. All these spots were visited and pointed out to the son by his deeply interested father.

Then followed a narrative of his enrolment in the militia; his skill as one of the band of musicians, and how he plumed himself very foolishly on his martial appearance; his attendance on a grand field-day, when colours worked by the Ladies Grimston (daughters of the Earl) were presented by their own fair hands to the troops; the previous sermon at the Abbey from the text, "In the name of the Lord will we set up our banners;" the deep impression produced by this eloquent sermon, and its unfortunate dissipation by the convivial freedom of the preacher at the dinner afterwards given to the officers at Gorhambury, the seat of Earl Grimston. All these things too were circumstantially described.

Next came a detail of the ride in post-chaises homeward from the hall; of the quiet seat which my father obtained in one of these, and the unquiet companions he found there; of the fierce challenge flung at him by one because he would not vacate his own seat for the other's convenience; of the sword drawn by the wine-inflamed challenger, and the calm conduct of the sober challenged one, by which he not only escaped the sword of his angry adversary, but what was not improbable, considering his inebria-

tion, the misfortune or guilt of shedding his blood, had a conflict really taken place. These things the old man recounted, and for the hour almost became young again in his re-pictured youth. The various individuals with whom he came into contact at this early period, and their influence upon his religious exercises and studies were especially adverted to, as we passed through the town. There was, for instance, the well-bred and courteous gentleman, who talking with the then young Mr. Leifchild, invited him to his house, before which aged Dr. Leifchild now stood, and pointed out to his son the position of the room in which the following incident occurred :—

In the course of an evening which the inquiring youth spent with the clever and courteous gentleman, the latter addressed him upon the subject of the divinity of our blessed Lord, and cautiously broached to him his Unitarian sentiments. Skilled in the Unitarian mode of interpreting passages of Scripture, well read in the controversy, and withal bland and gentlemanly, he pressed his young and less controversial friend so closely, that the latter found himself unable to answer the objections and arguments urged upon him, and felt fearfully helpless and discomfited. Seeing this, his host pressed him to abjure his former sentiments, and said, "Since you cannot reply to these arguments—since your reason acquiesces in this view—why not, like an honourable young man, avow yourself on our side? Be manly, be candid, and show your superior information and judgment!" In extreme agitation of mind, the young man was silent and sadly embarrassed. He lifted up his heart in prayer for relief; and scarcely had he done this, when unearthly groans sounded through the passage, through the house, and rang from chamber to chamber. Instantly yells and dreadful exclamations succeeded. Up started my father, doubting for a moment whether he was in this world or another. Out of the room, out of the house he rushed, dashed down the street, reached his own dwelling in terror, and believed he had heard a ghostly warning

against heterodoxy! The state of the case, however, was simply this—the clever Unitarian received insane patients into his house, and they had united in chorus at this crisis of orthodoxy.

Our family was not without its tales of wonder and superstition. My grandfather's credulity has already been mentioned; and one of his daughters could a tale unfold that would enthrall the young, if it only amused the old. One of his sisters, also, was a believer in ghosts and ghost-lore, and could narrate a tale which she solemnly declared to be a true history. This shall be related in my father's words, as it happened in his St. Alban's period.

"I give an account of an occurrence which soon after befel my aunt, for the truth of which, as an event, I can vouch, but of which I can offer no solution. She was standing in a little shop fronting the street, while a customer was being served. On a sudden her absent son passed in the street before her, and as he passed gave her a look of recognition, which so surprised and overjoyed her, that, forgetting everything else, she rushed into the street after him. When there she could not see him, and concluded that he had gone to the alley which led to the Abbey" (my father pointed this out to me, and the place of apparition), "and meant to hide himself awhile. We all went, as soon as we could assemble, in search of him, but could not discover any trace of the son. My aunt then concluded that she had seen his spirit, and fell seriously ill. I noted the circumstances in writing at the time, and pondered over them.

"A few weeks afterwards my father came to see us, and my aunt truly divined his errand. He had received a letter from the captain of the ship in which her son was sailing, stating that the unfortunate lad had fallen from the mast and fractured his skull. While lying on his death-bed, he directed the captain to write to my father, whose address he named. The dates of this misfortune and of her hallucination corresponded precisely. The

deceased was a clever, amiable, and handsome youth, and his mother never completely recovered her animation after his death."

Continuing the narrative from this time, my father relates that he left his situation, and availed himself of an offer to reside in a house where religious services were permitted to be held by Wesleyans.

"Under this roof," says he, "I mixed with the travelling preachers. One of these, then a very young man, and in the first year of his travelling preachingship, greatly interested me by the order, correctness, and even elegance of his style, and also by his forcible appeals in his perorations. Upon my becoming better acquainted with him, he confessed that these were not his own, but those of Saurin, which he had repeated *verbatim*. By this means he obtained a good reputation, and became an acceptable preacher; but when he left Saurin, and relied upon his native efforts, he fell so much short of his former sermons, that he speedily declined. I was surprised at this declension when I afterwards heard him in City-road Chapel, in London, and I then saw the folly of beginning upon a higher level than one's own. From another's level a man must descend, while from his own he may rise.

"Being now about nineteen or twenty years of age, I resolved to remove to the metropolis, where I obtained employment in different places, and attended public worship at the Wesleyan Chapel in Great Queen Street, on the very spot where the new and spacious building now stands. The dimensions of the place, and the large congregation, with the superiority of the preaching, and of the whole ordering of the service, much interested me.

"One Sunday morning the Rev. Joseph Benson, a thin and not a tall man, in advanced years, was the preacher. His subject was Peter's denial of his Saviour. Mr. Benson's personifications were bold and masterly, and so much affected me that I

was carried away, and knew not at the close where I was sitting. I have seldom heard so powerful a preacher. I heard him afterwards as often as possible. In the first portion of his sermons he was expository and didactic, and abounded in heads and divisions. He sometimes referred to and pronounced the original Greek words. Towards the close he warmed, and became impassioned. Then he thundered, or rather screamed, until the whole congregation became affected.

“I was now carrying on my occupation under an employer who was a simple, pious, and well-meaning man, but by no means intelligent. Perhaps he took to me more for my religious habits and conversation than for experience in my business. I was induced by him to go and hear a then celebrated preacher—William Huntingdon, a Hyper-Calvinist, or Antinomian—at Monkwell-street Chapel. My employer was devoted to him, because he had been the first preacher to awaken religious emotions in him. I was in the habit of going to hear Huntingdon on the Tuesday evenings.

“The chapel was always crowded, chiefly by males, all apparently of the middle class of tradesmen and working men. The preacher’s sermon had all the appearance of being spontaneous; but I soon discovered that it had been well studied beforehand. His tall, plain, rough exterior, and his even flow of words, running on without hesitation, together with his habit of saying strong and uncouth things, had the effect of arresting and keeping up the attention. He was very dogmatical, and extremely censorious about other preachers. His facility in interweaving texts of Scripture with the body of his own discourse was remarkable; but in this he was often guided by the mere sound of the words, and put the most forced and fanciful, if not profane, construction upon many of them. He abused the commentators; yet their works were found in his library, after his decease, with marks of having been well read. His favourite expression, when interpreting (or profaning) Scripture passages,

was, 'I say it; and if asked who told this to me, my reply is, God the Holy Ghost. What do I care for your Calvinism, Arminianism, Socinianism, or all the other devilisms in the world?'

"I have in my possession an account of Huntingdon by one of his hearers for twenty years, who confesses that in all that time he never heard him inculcate one moral duty, or enforce any topic of practical piety. He deprived Scripture precepts of their force by spiritualising them. Thus, to feed the hungry was to preach Christ to believers; to clothe the naked was to insist on sinners putting on the righteousness of Christ. I shuddered when I heard him thus explain the words of our blessed Lord, 'No man putteth new wine into old bottles,' &c. 'Now,' said Huntingdon, 'do you know what this means? Your men-made preachers take this literally; but the spiritual meaning is given to me by the Holy Ghost. Listen! The new wine is God's everlasting love; the old bottles are old sinners. God never puts His love into the hearts of old sinners—that is, the non-elect. If He did, it would burst them and blow them to pieces with pride. There, that's the real meaning of this precious passage.'

"My employer told me that in one Tuesday night's sermon he inveighed bitterly against missionary societies, which were then beginning to attract general attention. 'That is not God's work,' said he. 'There is too much noise of the tools and the hammers. The spiritual temple is to be built without noise of hammers and tools.' He then proceeded to warn his hearers against countenancing such delusions by contributing money to them. 'But,' added he, 'remember this—the quarterly collection is to be made next Sunday at Providence Chapel, Titchfield Street, where I shall preach to you; and if you are not all much more liberal than you have been, by the living God, I will preach to you no more!' On the day of collection, as my employer declared, the plates were so loaded with small money,

that hats were found necessary by way of supplementary collection.

“When a fire happened at Huntingdon’s house in Paddington, and destroyed property to the value of £50 before it could be extinguished, my employer, Mr. B., with four others of Huntingdon’s devotees, waited upon him with £50, which they had subscribed amongst themselves. The servant came to the door with a message to the effect that Mr. Huntingdon was ‘engaged with their Master.’ The next day they returned, and were admitted to Mr. Huntingdon’s presence in a large room. He exclaimed, ‘What do you all want here?’ They then timidly explained their object, and laid the money on the table. Huntingdon took it up, counted it carefully, and then carried it away, merely saying, ‘There are enough of you to bring it!’* ”

“I had now to ponder upon my future course. An impression, which had been some time before made upon my mind, was revived and deepened by occasional suggestions from other quarters, namely, that God might be designing me for the exercise of my gifts in the Christian ministry. This led me to resolve upon watching for further intimations from Providence in reference to the sacred calling. I inwardly vowed that I would not shut any door that opened for this employment of my powers; yet, from a disposition to do nothing rashly which

* It may be interesting to some readers to learn that this singular man, who was originally a coalheaver, wrote the following epitaph for himself, which may now be read at the chapel erected for persons of his persuasion at Lewes, Sussex :—

“Here lies the Coalheaver,
Beloved of his God, but abhorred of men.
The Omniscient Judge at the Grand Assize
Shall ratify and confirm this,
To the confusion of many thousands,
For England and its Metropolis shall know
That there hath been a prophet among them.
“W. H., S. S. (Sinner Saved.)”

influenced me through life, I did not put myself in the way of receiving invitations to preach, and removed to a larger sphere of business. But I gave myself more to the reading of theological works, and perused Fletcher's 'Appeal and Checks,' Buck's 'Theological Dictionary,' and some treatises on religious experience. I also studied Claude's 'Essay on the Composition of a Sermon,' and devoured Robinson's translation of Saurin's 'Sermons,' parts of which I committed to memory. By these, and especially his sermons on 'Election,' and on 'The Deep Things of God,' my doctrinal opinions became considerably modified.

"Though such invitations were unsought by me, I was frequently called upon to fill up the appointments of some of the 'local preachers' in the Wesleyan Connexion. Owing to my vow, I did not dare to refuse; and thus I seemed to be providentially, and quite apart from my own movements, led to the work of preaching the Gospel."

CHAPTER II.

His Gradual Introduction to the Ministry.

“**W**HEN about twenty-three years old I became a candidate for an engagement in what, at the City-road Chapel, was termed, ‘the Workhouse Community.’ This consisted of devoted young men who employed the spare hours of every Sunday to visit the several workhouses of the Metropolis, and to exhort, sing, and pray with the inmates of different wards. Every one had to preach a trial sermon, and those brethren who were generally well read, gifted, and critical, assembled to pass a judgment upon the preacher. It was considered a proof of great ability to obtain from them a unanimous vote of approbation.

“My first sermon was from the text, ‘Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God’ (Heb. xii. 15), and my discourse consisted of several heads and one division, carefully written out, much elaborated, and committed faithfully to memory. It was therefore delivered with fluency; but after proceeding for about a quarter of an hour, the President exclaimed that he thought what had been said was quite sufficient to enable the brethren to form a judgment, and I was requested to retire. When recalled I was informed of the unanimous approval of the brethren; my satisfaction, however, was alloyed by not being allowed to deliver the whole discourse so carefully prepared.”

We now have a brief sketch of a preacher about to become famous and foremost amongst the Wesleyans:—

“Before I went into Hoxton Academy, I frequently heard Jabez Bunting at the Chapel in the City Road and elsewhere.

He was remarkable for his correctness in speaking, for his emphatic pronunciation, and for the clear and orderly arrangement of his discourses. I followed him from place to place, and often heard the same sermons. I am convinced they were delivered after careful committal to memory.

"I once brought a number of students with me to hear him at the City-road Chapel, and challenged them to detect a single important word out of its place, which they failed to do.

"He was then in the zenith of his popularity, and was a thin, sedate, and pleasant-looking man. I went out with him on some of his appointments, and in some degree got acquainted with him. He was one of those who afterwards came to me and remonstrated with me upon my change of sentiments, when I became a Calvinist. He candidly confessed, however, that he thought I should be more useful among the Calvinists.

"I have maintained a firm friendship with him for many years, and also with his two sons."

It will be seen in the sequel that my father attended the remains of this noted Wesleyan minister to the grave, and took a leading part in the funeral service on that occasion.

"I was now," he continues, "frequently called upon to fill up the appointments of local preachers. I sometimes delivered three or four short addresses on a Sabbath afternoon, and thus I acquired both readiness and boldness in speaking, and was not much affected by interruptions.

"I was invited to preach at seven o'clock on the Sabbath mornings at the little chapel adjoining the large one in the City Road. On these occasions Jabez Bunting was sometimes one of my hearers. After this, several of the itinerant preachers invited me to enter regularly upon preaching engagements.

"A great change was now taking place in my doctrinal views, which the preachers endeavoured to oppose and argue against. Long conversations were held with me by Jabez Bunting, Mr. Benson, Dr. Adam Clark, and other justly celebrated ministers

of the same denomination. One principal point of difference lay in the way of regarding the first moving cause of conversion, or in theological terms, 'Effectual Calling.' This, I argued from my own experience, was entirely from Heaven, and involved a previous divine determination. Though I was treated in the most judicious, kind, and affectionate manner, no change was produced in my opinions: Mr. Bunting in particular, as I have said, inferred from my general views and phraseology that I should labour more pleasantly to myself in some other religious connexion.

"The necessity of coming to some determination now pressed heavily upon me, and I remember to have spent a whole night in prayer and fasting, in the hope of ascertaining the will of God concerning my movements. Such prayer and anxiety were not disregarded.

"On the day following the night in which I had been so earnestly imploring divine direction, I received a note from Mr. Thomas Wilson, the Treasurer of Hoxton Academy for the training of Young Men for the Independent Ministry. In his note I was invited to meet him that day at his office, in Artillery Place. There he received me kindly, and there I first became acquainted with him, and found him to be placid and mild, yet prompt and decisive.

"'I hear,' said he, 'that you object to become a Wesleyan minister, on account of a change in your sentiments; permit me to offer you a place in Hoxton Academy.' 'I replied that I was hardly a Calvinist, having a strong objection to the doctrine of Reprobation.' 'Well,' said he, 'can you conscientiously subscribe to the *doctrinal* articles of the Church of England?' 'I think I can, in general terms,' was my reply. 'Then go,' rejoined he, 'dispose of your business at once, and prepare to enter Hoxton.' Accordingly, I broke up my establishment and became a theological student.

"In 1804 I was admitted into the Hoxton Academy, and in

my funeral sermon for Thomas Wilson, Esq., I have given some further account of the steps which led to this admission. I now applied myself diligently to my studies in order to make up for lost time. I employed myself studiously in the mornings and evenings, very early and very late,* in making out a body of divinity from the works of old divines which I found in the library.

“My readiness in preaching caused me to be put frequently on ‘the preaching list,’ from the commencement of my studies. The calls out of doors greatly hindered my proficiency in classical and other similar studies. But I became a favourite with Dr. Simpson, the resident tutor; having heard me preach, he was greatly pleased with my views. Yet my preaching was from the first censured by the high Calvinists as too Arminian, while by the Arminians it was considered too Calvinistic. This led me into occasional conflicts, not of my own seeking.

“During one vacation I was preaching at Colchester, and consented to take the evening service at the Baptist Meeting, after having completed the afternoon services at the ‘Round Chapel.’ While walking away from the latter, a member of the Baptist Meeting who held high sentiments accosted me in the street, and rudely demanded of me whether I did not intend to give them ‘some better stuff in the evening.’ I was annoyed and passed on; when, however, I reached the Baptist Chapel at the appointed hour, and was about to ascend the pulpit, I found this man standing at the foot of the stairs, and heard him repeat his insulting question. I was irritated, and paused and demanded of him that *he* should ascend the pulpit and preach, as he was an objector to my doctrine. I began to push him up the stairs, but he was soon abashed, and made a hasty movement aside. I preached on the conversion of St. Paul to a deeply interested audience.

* Often, as he has told me, in a fireless room, in the depth of winter; and sometimes he made his sermons in the night.

“Although I preached too much while at Hoxton, I thus had an opportunity of ministering at several chapels, as, Orange Street Chapel, Leicester Square; Camden Chapel, Peckham; and at Mr. Jones’s two chapels, at Islington and Silver Street, continually. Once at Silver Street I preached a sermon from the text, ‘Brethren, pray for us.’ A young man, then present, afterwards went to America, and died there, having previously sent home an account of his conversion, from the sermon referred to. The text, he said, and the sermon had followed him wherever he travelled.”

A hearer of my father in those days informed me that he was by far the most popular preacher in Silver-street Chapel, which was always so crowded to listen to him, that it was impossible to gain entrance after the service had commenced.

One or two interesting incidents connected with the Hoxton period may now be narrated. The first of these relates to a young man of great popularity during his brief life, and whose name is still remembered.

“When I was at Hoxton I was preaching at a chapel in Hertford, and there delivered a sermon from Psalm xxiii. 1. It had numerous heads and sub-divisions, and upon them I examined some of the hearers at their own homes. While so engaged I was informed of a youth who could give me a particular account of them all. He was sent for, and soon appeared—a mere boy, with a ruddy countenance and fair hair. Upon my requesting him to repeat what he recollected of my discourse, with much modesty, but equal promptitude, he began and went through my sermon with such accuracy, exactitude of words, and imitation of my tone and manner, that I was amazed—his name was Thomas Spencer.

“I lost no time in mentioning him to Mr. Thomas Wilson, our treasurer, who took him under his patronage, and by his assistance he was placed in business with a glover in Cheapside. Soon afterwards he became a student for the ministry at Hoxton

Academy, when I was completing its curriculum. He astonished us all by his facility in remembering and repeating sermons, and pleased us by his fondness for writers of the old divinity school, as well as by his interesting appearance. He was, indeed, an old divine with a young head. He composed sermons, but made little progress in classics or in general knowledge.

“Having myself to supply at Hoxton Chapel (not that adjoining the Academy) for six weeks, preaching three times each Sabbath day, I requested Mr. Wilson to allow him to introduce the services in the afternoon by reading the Scriptures and praying. This was his first performance in London, and his appearance and readiness delighted the congregation, who at first thought he was a Sunday-school teacher. Every Sunday when he rendered me the same assistance, he was the chief attraction. Afterwards, he became a celebrated preacher in Liverpool, and perhaps the most popular preacher of his day. When at the height of his popularity he was, unfortunately, drowned while bathing in the Mersey. For his fame his early removal was favourable, as I am convinced that from his want of general information, and his irregular habits of study, he could not have maintained his popularity for many years. I furnished his successor and biographer, Dr. Raffles, with several particulars of his life.”

The teacher of the college to whom my father most frequently referred, next to Dr. Simpson, was the lecturer on elocution, of whom he speaks thus favourably:—

“I derived great benefit from the lectures of Mr. True on elocution. He was a gentleman in appearance and deportment, and had been designed for the stage; but his short stature and other defects disqualified him for it, and he taught elocution to select classes. He had a piercing eye, and a somewhat grave and placid countenance. His voice was most agreeable in its tones, and of great compass and variety. He requested us to stand at the length of the whole room from him, and then made

us recite and repeat to him. He attended to and corrected our pronunciation (especially with reference to the vowels), and our cadences, inflections, and pauses. After getting us to read to him, he would say, 'Perhaps I had better read the passage myself.' He would then take the book, and without rising from his chair, with all the ease of conscious power, read over the speech or passage which we had so often repeated. The contrast with what we had done was most striking. It seemed a new piece, or like a landscape previously clouded, but suddenly illuminated with a flood of sunlight. Then he would request us to recite the piece again, but we were generally too much ashamed of ourselves to comply, and deferred our repetition till the next lecture.

"A desire was awakened in my breast to become a proficient in the art of speaking. I therefore devoted myself to Mr. True's lectures, and to elocution. I committed to a faithful and tenacious memory all the extracts from various authors which were commended to us. I found Mr. True attempted to teach us more by example than rule, that we might not become stiff and pedantic. I set myself to catch his every tone and gesture, and I was acknowledged to have succeeded. This was the more difficult, as there was nothing in his manner or tones but what was perfectly natural. There was no effort, no appearance of art, nothing theatrical. You felt enchanted, as if by some exquisite singer or player upon an instrument, and you could not analyse the enchantment, or discover its causes. You forgot the speaker in the sentiments he excited.

"Once, I remember, when Mr. True was reciting the speech of Earl Strafford upon his trial before his peers, he came to the part where the Earl checked himself, saying, 'My Lords, I have troubled you longer than I should have done, were it not for the interest of these dear pledges which a saint in heaven has left me.' He pronounced these words with such tenderness that all of us were affected, and down old Dr. Simpson's grave and hard-

featured countenance dropped plentiful tears, while his sobs were distinctly heard. Fearing he had gone too far in the pathetic, the lecturer began Cowper's John Gilpin, and with such immediate effect that smiles were now seen on the old Doctor's face, while tears were still rolling down.

"Some of the students were very intractable, and would not get out of their old habits. These, after a few fruitless efforts, Mr. True generally left to their fate, with a quiet sentence. One was unfortunate in his gestures, pointing with his finger to the ceiling when apostrophising flowers, and to the floor when doing the same with stars. Another shot out his right hand while speaking, like a boy playing at marbles. A third made the most provoking false emphasis. Others repeated Milton like chattering cranes or chirping sparrows.

"One ludicrous circumstance may be mentioned. In reciting Satan's Address to the Evil Spirits from *Paradise Lost*, a stout student was enjoined to pronounce the three words, 'Princes, Potentates, Warriors,' in successively louder tones, and to speak out boldly. He hardly needed this advice, for the first word came out like distant thunder, the second like approaching thunder, and the third like a terribly near and loud clap. At this last the large house-dog, Pompey, who had been asleep under the teacher's chair, started up and jumped out of the window into the garden. 'The dog is a good judge, Sir,' mildly remarked Mr. True.

"It may be difficult to credit the fact, but there were many witnesses to it, that on every following elocution day Pompey was missing; and on Tuesdays and Fridays, when Mr. True made his appearance, no one could discover him anywhere."

It is highly probable that my father was much indebted to Mr. True for his own correct pronunciation and propriety in public speaking. He seems also to have been a favourite with his teacher, who once came to hear him at Kensington. In his later days he read and re-read *Paradise Lost*, and referred to

the instructions of the Hoxton lecturer. He sometimes requested his younger ministerial and other friends to read the same passages aloud, and then took the pains to point out their improprieties. In fact, he acted the lecturer over again to them, and always attached great importance to high-class elocutional teaching, lamenting both publicly and privately the lack of it in some institutions for ministerial training. On monotones, false cadences, and incorrect pronunciation in preachers, he was rather unmerciful, regarding them as being capable of correction, and as of primary disadvantage to a speaker's acceptance.

A laughable exposure of imposture occurred by my father's inadvertence at this place. "I remember," says he, "being suddenly called down from the lecture-room, when I was the senior student, to attend to the written application of a deaf and dumb lad for relief. I was absorbed in my studies, and hardly knew what I said, when I instantly addressed the lad thus—'O, are you the deaf and dumb boy?' Thrown off his guard, I suppose, by my quickness and eagerness of inquiry, he as readily replied, 'Yes, Sir, I am.' Hardly had he uttered these words when, recollecting himself, he took to his heels and ran away with speed."

While at the Academy or College, he heard some preachers at Hoxton Chapel whose fame was at that time considerable, but he was most impressed with the Rev. J. Brewer, of Birmingham, of whom he has left this notice:—

"I heard him only at Hoxton Chapel. His fame had travelled before him. I expected a loud harangue, and got home from Mr. Jones's chapel at Islington, where I had been preaching, as soon as I could, to hear Mr. Brewer in the afternoon. I found the chapel thronged. He was standing in the pulpit in the most composed manner, and was speaking low, and with great deliberation, making occasional pauses. The audience was breathless with attention. He looked round upon them, and with what an eye!

"His text in the morning had been, 'My peace I give unto you;' in the afternoon it was, 'Is it peace?' in the evening the text was, 'What hast thou to do with peace?' He told, with thrilling effect, a story of a multitude rejoicing in the streets of Birmingham at the restitution of political peace. He applied this religiously, and exclaimed, 'O my brother, such was the heavenly joy over you when the Holy Spirit said to you—It is peace.' Certainly, his preaching was worthy of the name of preaching.

"He was blessed to the conversion of Mr. Jones, a fellow-student, in the country, who, when hearing Mr. Brewer, saw the preacher looking at him and heard him inquiring, 'Young man, did you pray to God this morning?' This direct appeal arrested his attention, and prepared for what followed.

"I was told that he had tried several methods of preaching. At first he attempted the well-digested discourse, but this did not much interest the people. Then he tried the homely and colloquial style, but this succeeded only with the low-minded and uneducated. Next he attempted a middle style between the two previous styles, and this fully succeeded. He was now sufficiently erudite and correct to satisfy the few educated persons, and yet sufficiently plain, colloquial, and pointed to take with the masses."

His own chosen minister, for frequent hearing, was the Rev. John Clayton, the father of three preaching sons, two of whom survived my father, viz.—the Rev. George Clayton, recently deceased, and the Rev. John Clayton, still living. The latter was an intimate and valued friend of my father, and in his early years had preceded him in the ministry at Kensington. In their late years the two aged ministers sometimes preached together, in the new chapel at Brighton; Mr. Clayton being often a hearer of his long-loved associate.

Of the father of this family Mr. Leifchild wrote as follows:—

"On leaving the Methodists, and entering as a student at

Hoxton Academy, I attached myself to his ministry at the Weigh-house Chapel. His striking figure, his gentlemanly manner, his good voice and gesture, his frequent personal appeals, his divisions and set-sentences, fixed me as his frequent hearer.

“Once, when he was preaching from the text, ‘And what will ye do in the evil day?’ he adverted, towards the close of his discourse, to the day of death, and that of judgment. He then directed his eyes to that part of the gallery where I was sitting, and exclaimed, ‘Undecided or unsettled Christian, what will *you* do then? Careless sinner, what will *you* do then? I will tell you: you will die and be damned!’ A shudder was the consequence.

“I caught, perhaps, some of his decided manner and terseness of expression, but this wore off. He was kind and attentive to me when he knew me. Once, while a student, I preached for him in the afternoon. Mrs. Clayton, who was present, and was herself a fair divine, conveyed me home in her carriage, and pleased me much, at first, by saying that she could not find fault with a single word in my sermon. This she soon qualified by saying she could not *hear* a single word; she was, in fact, deaf, and could only hear tolerably well when riding in a carriage over stones in public streets.”

At the small chapel attached to the Academy, wherein the students were wont to exercise their gifts, my father first heard the famous Rowland Hill, with whom he was afterwards to become so strangely acquainted at Surrey Chapel. Looking down to the pew occupied by the students, Mr. Hill addressed to them such pointed and coarse advice that they were much offended, and at once conferred together in whispers to propose a subsequent letter of remonstrance. When, however, Mr. Hill met them after the service, and affectionately addressed them, the offence was forgotten.

Numerous reminiscences of several of the students, some ludicrous and some sorrowful, diversified my father’s conversation

in his years of retirement. One of the students, while attempting to exercise his gifts in the little chapel, stopped, and looking down at his brethren exclaimed, "Hard work, Sirs." My father's most interesting reminiscence in connexion with his associates was the following:—

"Mr. Edward May was a fellow-student with me. He had been an infidel, and was so affected by a discourse of mine at the fire-side as to become deeply attached to me. During my affliction with a rheumatic fever, when every bone in my body seemed to be racked with pain, he attended my bedside day and night. While suffering from the severest paroxysms the consolations of God were so abundant, and my repetitions of Scripture so pertinent, copious, and ready, that my friend was astonished and delighted. I also was surprised at my own scriptural fluency."

Mr. May was afterwards the minister of a chapel at Croydon, from which he removed to New York, and there became a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. My father had often talked about him, and narrated one or two of his humorous sayings, but never expected to behold his face again on earth.

During the time when the minister of Craven Chapel was in the full tide of his engagements, and was resident in one of the suburbs of London, he was one morning leaving his house when, upon opening the street-door, he saw a gentleman about to knock at it. Looking upon him intently, my father started back, and exclaimed, "It cannot be—"

"But it is," was the equally brief reply.

"It is impossible."

"It is a fact," was the answer.

"It is his ghost," affirmed the Londoner.

"It is himself," replied the stranger.

"I won't believe it."

"I'll take my oath of it,"—said the Rev. Thomas May, for it was no other person. He had come from New York, and visited

his early and much-loved friend, with whom he spent several hours in pleasing conversation.

For his old and esteemed tutor, Dr. Simpson, Mr. Leifchild always retained a cordial regard, and upon his decease wrote the only biographical sketch of him, which appeared in one of the earlier volumes of the "*Congregational Magazine*." This account of his triumphant death was subsequently reprinted by my father in another book.

When, early in his student days, my father received an invitation to settle at a chapel in Chelmsford, Essex, Dr. Simpson (knowing how premature such a settlement would prove) exclaimed, in his strong phraseology—"If you go, it shall be over my old body!"—"Never, Sir, will I go," rejoined the student, "till you give your consent,"—and he did not.

By the above detailed course of training, and by very frequent opportunities of preaching to various congregations of note at that period, and particularly also by his early efforts amongst the Methodists, there can be no doubt that Mr. Leifchild had been well prepared, and fully qualified for the occupation of some important post as a settled minister and pastor. He was now neither too young nor too immature. He had addressed common people and advanced Christians; he had preached to the poor and the comparatively rich; he had heard several of the best preachers of the day, and some also of the worst; he had experienced the difficulties of life, and had known its adversities; he had seen death in the houses of others, and death had entered his own house; he had been a husband and a widower; a friend, and almost friendless; in short, he had passed through the most disciplinary of all preparatory schools for teaching others—the school of affliction. He came not merely from the college to the chapel, but previously from the severest of schools to the college. This, therefore, was a man who could draw instruction for others from the depths of his own soul, and the experience of his own life.

A singular and rather perplexing circumstance must be related

previously to the account of Mr. Leifchild's acceptance of his first charge, and it is related in his own words:—

“Before accepting the call to Kensington, while returning from a visit to that place, I heard at the house of a friend that Rowland Hill had announced me to preach at Surrey Chapel on the following Tuesday evening, he himself having an engagement on that day in the country. He had mentioned me in terms so singular that some curiosity was excited, and I at first declined to go. But on reaching my house I found a letter from him inclosed in one from Mr. Wilson, who particularly requested me to comply with the request, to which therefore I assented.”

The following is Mr. Hill's letter:—

“MY DEAR SIR,—I hear much of a young man of the name of Leifchild, belonging to the Hoxton Academy. It was supposed that he was going to *settle* (a bad word for a young recruiting spiritual officer) at Kensington; but that there are a set of formal stupid Presbyterians there, who by no means suit his taste, and that he is consequently still waiting for the further directing hand of Providence to know where he is to go.

“Now I have something that would answer very delightfully between my London and country engagements, provided I could find some open-hearted, liberal youth, on principle detached from all sorts of narrow-minded sectarian bigotry, who loves to work, and who can take up the cross that he may spend and be spent in the blessed service of the Gospel.

“I ask, therefore, Is the young man at liberty? Do you think he would do for us? Could you let us have a taste of him next Tuesday evening at Surrey Chapel?

“I have another proposal to make to you. I mean, by the blessing of God, to go down to Chatham, and other parts about Kent, on the 14th of April. I shall be absent from London till the Friday or Saturday afterwards. Perhaps in that journey I may pick up another old Presbyterian meeting-house which needs better furniture.

“I am sorry to send to you on a Lord's day, but I want to publish this evening who is to be the preacher on Tuesday, and I cannot determine till I have your answer. I have to preach on the Tuesday afternoon at Stratford. Yours very affectionately,

“Thomas Wilson, Esq.”

“R. HILL.”

“On reaching Surrey Chapel on the appointed evening, I found a large congregation assembled, including several of my fellow-students. Towards the close of my sermon, the auditors who had listened very attentively to it previously, displayed a disposition to risibility which confounded me. I expressed my regret if I had unintentionally said anything to excite a smile, and quoted the couplet of the poet Cowper—

‘Tis pitiful to court a grin
When you should woo a soul.’

“Many were evidently ashamed, and there was a complete restoration of gravity for a short while, but the congregation was again moved to risibility. I was much perplexed to conceive its cause, but as they did not entirely recover their gravity I hastened on to a conclusion.

“The cause of this impropriety was immediately made known to me by some of my fellow-students. Rowland Hill, having returned sooner than was expected, had quietly entered the organ-gallery behind the pulpit. Listening to me he performed several antics—at one time expressive of his assent, at another of his dissent from what I was saying. Many of the people observed him, for it was impossible to look at the preacher without seeing him, and hence their risibility.

“I was indignant at his unseemly conduct, and when he came into the vestry and asked me to become his curate at Wotton-under-Edge, in Gloucestershire, I told him I declined his offer, and was about to settle as minister at Kensington. ‘That reminds me,’ said he, ‘of young men setting up in business before they have served their apprenticeship.’

“He then stated the qualities he desired in his curate, who was also to preach at Surrey Chapel during his vacation. He added, that he had one already, but he was too much of a lady’s preacher, and that he had no slap-dash about him; of which, said he, even you have not too much. But on perceiving my reluctance to entertain his overtures, he abruptly wished me good night.

“He afterwards called upon me, to request me in his absence to return an answer on his behalf to an expected vote of thanks for a donation which he had given to the British and Foreign Bible Society, at their next annual meeting. He came and sat in his carriage, and on my going out to speak to him, one of his horses began pawing the wet ground, and thereby splashed me provokingly. ‘That,’ said Mr. Hill, ‘is dirt which *will* wipe off; beware, Sir, of dirt which won’t.’

“He always appeared to me, when I was in his company, to be labouring to say something smart or funny, instead of joining in free conversation, and if his saying failed to excite laughter, he was disappointed. Some of his observations in the pulpit were coarse and even offensive. I remember, in particular, a very coarse remark after a sermon he preached at Hayes, Middlesex—(too coarse to be inserted). Yet his gentlemanly origin and education took off in some degree from the bad effect of this habit, and prevented him from descending to the low buffoonery of Matthew Wilks.

“I thank God I have lived to the day when such antics and ridiculous sayings are no longer tolerated in the pulpit. I remember, when talking with Mr. Jay about these things, and the odd texts which he himself sometimes took, that he remarked—these things stick to people, while your smooth sentences run off the mind as water off marble.’ I rejoined—‘But remember, Sir, that dirt also will stick, and what an example you set of taking liberties with Scripture phraseology which others will not fail to plead in excuse on their own licence.’ I instanced one of his perversions of a text which he thus announced before his sermon, ‘Take it by the tail.’* He admitted the force of my remonstrance, and promised to abstain from such oddities in future.”

* Exodus iv. 4.

CHAPTER III.

The Kensington Period.

(FROM 1808 TO 1824.)

SECTION I.

IN the year 1808, Mr. Leifchild, who was then twenty-eight years of age, received and accepted a cordial invitation from the Christian community worshipping at Hornton-street Chapel, Kensington, and in 1809 he was publicly ordained as their pastor. He there made the customary profession of faith, and received a charge from his old tutor, Dr. Simpson. The ardour in his work which characterised his whole life, naturally displayed itself brightly in this his first pastoral charge. He soon attracted general attention in the pulpit, and gained a considerable increase in his congregations. The first cause of this increase he attributed to the delivering on Sunday evenings of a series of discourses on the Lord's Prayer, and the advantage then obtained he never lost. Nevertheless, the congregation was sustained only by repeated and unabated efforts on his part. "There was," he observes, "a great prejudice in the town against dissenters. Many of my hearers resided at a distance, or held situations in London, and some of the managers of the chapel, who were Scotchmen, were not very spiritual. Of the deacons, some resided in London, and one was very old. He also was a Scotchman, but a very good man. He had been a gardener on a nobleman's estate, and now lived on a small income, respected for his piety and integrity. He was my best help, but after a long and lingering malady, died in his apartments. Mr. Duncan (such was his name) was nearly twelve months in dying. During that long period I never

found him otherwise than pious, resigned, and cheerful. He always had a guinea to spare for any religious object of importance, although his income did not much exceed £50 per annum. One of the managers was worth at least £20,000, and was as niggardly as Duncan was generous. 'Here, Duncan,' exclaimed this wealthy man, on the occasion of an important collection at the chapel, 'here, Duncan, will you put this in the plate for me?' handing him two half-crowns. 'I will, Sir,' replied Duncan, 'with my own guinea.'

As my father's character became respected, and as his pulpit abilities were the subject of much remark in the town, several highly reputable families added themselves to the chapel. With these the minister soon became acquainted, and by all of them he was highly esteemed. They who had been taught that dissent was vulgar, and dissenters illiterate, discovered their mistake in this instance, and were proportionably pleased. They were benefited by his preaching, and to their surprise found that his doctrines were by no means so different from the doctrines of the Church of England as they had been led to imagine.

It may be here mentioned, that during my father's public ministry of sixteen years at Kensington, he had been enabled by the help of God to remove the general opinion so adverse to dissenters when he commenced his work, to win the regard of many who at first avoided him, and to elevate the whole character of the Christian community at Hornton-street Chapel; that in the issue nearly every remnant of opprobrium had passed away, and the dissenters occupied a high place in the esteem of the townspeople, and in the regard of all Christians in the vicinity. Here, also, let it be added, that this high place has never been lost, and that my father's honoured successors have admirably continued his labours. The respected Independent minister now officiating in Kensington has gathered together a congregation whose praise (together with that of their pastor) is in all the churches. He does not forget his early predecessor, who laboriously laid the founda-

tion, while from the height of his present prosperity and the peaceful pasturage of the high land, he can bestow a grateful retrospective glance upon the lowly labours of the once unknown Hoxton student who bore the heat and burden of the day, who was called to fight in the front of the battle, and to wrest every foot of ground from enemies against whom there was at that time no one but himself to contend.

It is a great and striking advance that the preaching of the Gospel has made amongst dissenters in Kensington, from the feeble patronage of a superannuated coachman,* to the ample and estimable company of believers who now throng an elegant sanctuary. Doubtless all is primarily attributable to Divine favour. Let not, however, the early channels of its communication be unremembered. As the grave closes over them, let a grateful succession of spiritual posterity embalm them in lasting and loving remembrance.

It was not by elaborate arguments or polemical discourses that Mr. Leifchild sought to overcome the prejudice against dissenters so widely prevalent in Kensington. It was by earnest preaching of the Gospel, by a holy life, and by the exhibition of the warmest Christian love on all suitable occasions.

The conversion of a notoriously abandoned and dissolute man from the lowest class, which took place under my father's ministry at Hornton-street Chapel, was not only in itself remarkable, but it also led to an unexpected acquaintance between the high-church vicar and the dissenting minister. The whole circumstances are narrated in a lately printed volume,† from which one page may be here introduced.

* John Saunders, the "body-coachman" of George the Third. For thirty years he contributed out of his limited income the sum of thirty pounds annually to promote the preaching of the Gospel in the "village of Kensington."

† A Selection of Remarkable Facts of a Providential and Religious Character, &c. By the Rev. J. Leifchild, D.D. 8vo., 1860, pp. 148-157.

"Shortly afterwards the vicar called upon me and entered into familiar conversation with me on the great truths of the Gospel, evidently as the result of the impression which the shoemaker's wonderful conversion had produced. Thenceforth his kindly feeling towards me never decreased, and this was the more to be remarked on account of his standing in the Episcopal Church, as respected his learning, oratorical power, and zeal for God according to his knowledge. He was comparatively young, but with a magnanimous mind he had early determined to appreciate truth and goodness wherever they were found, and to follow them whithersoever they might lead. Soon afterwards he fell into a decline, and one evening, while we were holding a prayer meeting, news was brought us of his dangerous illness. I immediately requested those who led our devotions to bear him on their minds before God, and afterwards desired that no mention might be made of this circumstance, as I did not wish to draw attention to ourselves. But a report of it reached his sick chamber, and shortly after, upon the occasion of his removal for the benefit of change of air, I received from him the following note:—

"VICARAGE, KENSINGTON, *April 29th.*

"DEAR SIR,—I cannot leave Kensington without expressing to you my grateful feelings for the truly kind and Christian manner in which, during a very critical period of my illness, you were pleased to direct the prayers of your congregation to the Throne of Grace for my recovery. It has made a deep impression upon my mind.

"Those prayers were mercifully heard; and, by the blessing of God, I trust that I am in a state of progressive amendment. Slow indeed have been my advances, insomuch that even now I am totally incapable of the ordinary exertions of life; but I trust that a good Providence, whose mercies have indeed been around my path and about my bed, will, in His good time, perform the perfect work of restoration.

"Believe me to be, dear Sir,

With much respect,

Your faithful and obedient Servant,

"THOS. RENNELL."

Another and much earlier instance of conversion, attended with fruitful results, is thus narrated by my father:—

“I have to record an important instance of usefulness within two years after my settlement at Kensington. On my preaching the first anniversary sermon at Tonbridge Chapel in the New Road, a young man, named Smith, who had been under serious impressions, came to see the new building. The word (from Isa. lv. 6, 7) was fastened in his heart, and he became a true convert. Fired with zeal he entered the missionary field, and was sent to labour in Demerara, where he had great success. But the planters conspired against him, and got him imprisoned upon the false charge of encouraging the converted slaves to rebel. He had a mock trial, the proceedings of which were published. The directors of the Missionary Society remonstrated, and proposed to take more active measures. His piety was exemplary, and his converts were most tender towards him. His keepers only allowed him to write for money to the treasurer of the London Missionary Society, but they read all his letters; I have one of them, in which he contrived to write in a small hand, ‘2 Cor. iv. 8—11.’ This intimated the state of his mind.

“All efforts to obtain justice for him were vain, and he subsequently died in prison. He had made known the time and place of his conversion to Mr. Wilson, who informed me of the same. This is also mentioned in a biography of Smith, which was dedicated to me by its author, Rev. J. Barret, and entitled, ‘The Martyr of Demerara.’”

The “Kensington Church Book” contains entries in my father’s hand-writing of all the members of his church from 1808 to 1815, and an interesting addition thus headed: “A list of those to whom I have been made *truly useful*, as far as I can recollect, in their *conversion*; made not to gratify curiosity, but to excite gratitude, and to stimulate to fresh exertion. Nov. 1815.” Then follows a list of the names of thirty-two persons, and under each name a brief notice of the particulars of the case.

Most of these particulars are noteworthy; and it would appear as if some of the individuals might have afforded gratifying details of their conversion. Of these the following is an instance:—

“ 29. Mr. Holland (a bricklayer) came one evening *drunk*; yet towards the close he was impressed. The next Sunday evening he came again, and I noticed him as one of two young men who had behaved rudely the Sabbath evening preceding; but he had been cut to the heart. ‘I,’ said he to himself, ‘am the man intended.’ He soon fell ill, when the good work deepened. He is now consistent.”

Another interesting note relates to a lady belonging to a family whose name is prominent at Oxford in connexion with the University Press.

The list appears merely to refer to select cases, and not to include all the known instances of the minister’s usefulness in the years named. Amongst the attendants upon his ministry were Lord and Lady Molesworth, her daughters, and their friends. They had derived benefit from his pulpit instruction, and became his attached friends. He often referred in particular to the mother, Lady Molesworth, a truly pious elderly lady, who had apartments in Kensington Palace. She had two strong reasons for her attachment to my father’s ministry; one being the benefit which she herself had obtained from it, and the other being the influence which it had exercised on a favourite son,—Lord Molesworth. Lord Molesworth, her younger son, had heard Mr. Leifchild at Hornton-street Chapel, and though very wild and thoughtless at that time, was so affected by what he heard as to alter his mode of life. Another, and the elder son, was then in India, where, being laid on a sick-bed, he remembered the Psalms which his father, Viscount Molesworth, had read and expounded when he was a child at home, showing their reference to the Messiah, and thus confirming the truth of Scripture. I believe he came home, and it was then that he also

attended the ministry at Hornton-street Chapel. He now became devoted and useful; and having obtained an appointment in Ceylon, he repaired thither, and there continued his usefulness by distributing religious publications. His father dying, he succeeded to the title, and having acquired property in Ceylon, he determined to return home, assist at the chapel, and spend the remainder of his days with his aged mother. He notified to his mother the time of his embarkation, and she, calculating the length of the voyage, expected at a certain day to enfold her son in her embrace. She was disappointed, and the reason soon appeared in the reception of the melancholy intelligence that the vessel in which he had trusted himself, his wife, and all his acquisitions, had gone down at sea, and every life had been lost. "I feared," says my father, "on hearing the sad news, to call upon her; but on doing so I found her calm, and with erect and majestic figure. Looking at me she said: 'Dear pastor, God sustains me. I utter not a murmuring word. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

The younger son now succeeded to the estate and title; and wrote to my father from Ireland to inform him of the event, and to invite him to pay a visit to the place. When afterwards in Ireland, he paid the requested visit to the mansion near Drogheda. There he learnt much concerning the Irish peasantry, their habits and prejudices. Lord Molesworth had failed in every effort to get his numerous servants to attend to any instruction from a Protestant. To prove this he summoned his butler, and informed him that his guest was a minister, and was about to read and pray with the family. Therefore he wished all the servants to be present, together with his family. The butler hesitated, and upon being asked the reason of his hesitation, replied, "My lord, we will put our heads under your lordship's feet, but we won't turn Protestants."

The circle of the more notable, though perhaps only occasional

attendants at the unpretending chapel at Kensington enlarged itself continually. The minister being now known as a true natural gentleman, as well as a gifted preacher, was welcome as a visitor in houses wherein, at his first coming to the town, he could not have hoped for an entrance. One of these houses was situated in Kensington Gore,—of which still fashionable residences it was amongst the best. There lived one of those pleasant men who are not only gentlemen by position, but also by innate feeling. Mr. C. B. was commanding in person, and highly polished in manner; to my father he was drawn as a kindred spirit, though he had no affection for dissenters. He laughed at *them* and liked *him*. He was a stanch Churchman, but came occasionally to the chapel, where, as also in other places, he might be distinguished by the flower always fastened in a button-hole of his coat. “Here comes C. B.,” was my mother’s exclamation when he called at our house, “with his fresh flower and fresh colour.”

He invited to his table a select company of guests, chosen for their scholarship, their taste, and their eminence in their several walks of life. My father was one of these guests, and the only one who was a dissenter,—a title which at that time was almost a fatal barrier to all superior society. Mr. C. B. used to apologise for his friend, and declare that he was discovering his errors and was on his way to the Church. At this hospitable board the dissenting minister met, besides less known gentlemen, Mr. (afterwards Serjeant) Goulburn; the Rev. John Owen, of Fulham, one of the early promoters of the Bible Society, and also its early historian; and Mr. Stephen, a Master in Chancery, the friend of Wilberforce, and therefore the friend of the slave. Once, too, he was at this table with a remarkably taciturn but observant lady, whom he afterwards discovered to be Miss Edgeworth, the celebrated writer of tales. She had requested to be allowed to be present *incognito*, and it was said that she was there to study characters and find subjects for new tales,

With the Rev. John Owen my father often appeared on the platform, both being advocates, and both eloquent advocates, of the claims of the Bible Society. The old Reports of the "Kensington Auxiliary Bible Society" contain their names in conjunction, and those also of other and more celebrated contemporaries. Of this clergyman his dissenting friend has left the following sketch:—

"He was a great talker in company, and a good one, too; but his was not conversation. He engrossed so much attention that on this account he was often not invited. He was a most eloquent and ready speaker, and yet not extemporaneous. An individual who lived next door to him assured me that he often heard him reciting his speeches before-hand in his garden, when he was about to appear on the platform. He was a great adept in conciliating a public meeting. Once he alluded in such opprobrious terms to Tom Paine the infidel, that hisses were heard at his vituperation. He turned pale, but in a moment or two recovered himself. 'Did I hear a hiss?' continued he. 'Is it supposed that I mean to pronounce upon the eternal state of that wretched man? If this puny arm were permitted to do so (extending his right arm), it should dive into his grave and bring up before you Tom Paine as an advocate of the Bible Society.' Vociferous applause followed this adroit change.

"He longed for promotion in the Church, but never obtained it; the reason, I believe, was that he was wanting in decision. He was not evangelical enough to satisfy the evangelical party, and yet too much so to please the opposite party. Porteus, then bishop of London, was his admirer and patron. Having read one day in the journals that a certain living in London was vacant, he mused about it, and the same day received a letter from the bishop desiring him to call at the episcopal residence on the morrow. Very naturally he anticipated an offer of the vacant living, and went round to look at the parsonage-house and church before he called on the bishop. He made up his mind to accept the bishop's proposition, and repaired to his residence.

'Ah, Owen,' exclaimed his lordship, when the expectant entered the room, 'I am glad to see you. Of course you know why I have sent for you, and I hope you will accede to my request.' Mr. Owen bowed and expressed his willingness to do so. The bishop then took up a pamphlet and added:—'Take this pamphlet against the Bible Society, and answer it in your best style. Good morning.'

"Again; he had expectations of the vicarage of Kensington, when it became vacant, but it was given to Archdeacon Pott.

"He was not a good preacher; that is, he was neither a fluent nor a feeling one. So involved were his sentences that he seemed to be elaborating his discourse during its delivery. There was a striking contrast between his animation on the platform and his frigidity in the pulpit. I saw him on his death-bed. He was reserved as to his religious experience; whether from deficiency in it, or from want of confidence in me, I cannot say. He died poor, and would have died so whatever his income, from want of economy. Yet in life he occupied an important position, and was, in a certain sense, the making of the Bible Society."

Mr. C. B., the hospitable entertainer of men of this stamp, was at length the subject of a reverse of fortune both sudden and disastrous. Engaged on the Stock-Exchange, he was on one momentous matter either greatly misled or cruelly misused. Whatever the cause, the result was the same, and nothing less than his ruin. One day he came home at the usual hour to dinner, and after a moderate meal his wife, thinking him very silent, asked him how he was. "Pretty well, my love," said he, "for a ruined man!"

His quite unexpected fall produced a great sensation amongst his friends, and much sympathy; yet, strange to say, no succour. The ruined gentleman's large family were looking penury in the face; and dropped, as if by a sheer fall from a mountain height, —from luxury to want. Out of all the wealthy and eminent guests that had associated with them not one devised relief,

excepting, indeed, that one who was lowest of them all in mere worldly position, the poorest of them all in pecuniary resources, but the richest of them all in brotherly sympathy and ready benevolence. That man was the dissenting minister of Hornton-street.

At once he called together certain friends and proposed a scheme of relief. All commended him, but few actively co-operated with him. Nothing daunted at his loneliness, he applied personally to nearly every wealthy and generous man in the vicinity. Amongst others he called on his friend Mr. Wilberforce (of whom more presently) who gave a liberal donation, and this advice into the bargain: "Get a Quaker, Mr. Leifchild, get a Quaker down for a good sum, and you will have a number of them afterwards." My father did get a Quaker, and that Quaker did allure others; and, in truth, poor C. B. profited as much, if not more, by the once despised dissenters than by strict Churchmen. In all, my father raised for him the sum of five hundred pounds. To the day of his death the recipient was grateful to his friend in need. When his coat was indifferent, he still walked up Hornton-street with a flower in his button-hole, and when my father (after his removal) came to London, C. B. came to see him, and years afterwards was seen in Craven Chapel, still with a flower in his coat. Years again after that, my father visited his widow at Brighton, and only a year or two before his own death she dropped into the grave before him.

The justly celebrated Mr. Wilberforce was my father's most efficient coadjutor in this benevolent undertaking, and his most distinguished friend at the time. A pleasing and highly creditable letter of his to my father, upon the matter then in hand, now lies before me, and will gratify the reader.

"MARDEN PARK, GODSTONE, *January 18th, 1823.*

"(*Late on Saturday night.*)

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have this day heard from Lord Calthorpe, and I heard three or four days since from Lord Rocksavage. The latter cannot contribute. I really believe he is unable. The former offers

£20. I have had, however, a promise of £100 from the Marquis of Bute, who was applied to by the Bishop of Bristol. I heartily wish you may have been more successful, yet I own frankly that respecting and loving you (I say it sincerely) for your generous zeal, I dare not, nor have I ever been able to flatter myself with the hope of your plan answering; because it is only delivering him from the actual pressure, but without putting him in any such method of obtaining an income as would prevent the gradual accumulation of another similar load. Whereas, if he could have been persuaded to take his family to New South Wales or Van Dieman's Land, the sum to be raised (which would then obtain a more liberal support from consciousness that it was to be effectual to its purpose) would probably rescue him and his family from poverty, and render them comfortable for life, by the exertions and perhaps hardships of a very few years.

"(Sunday.) I lately recommended to the Governor of New South Wales a truly Christian pair, who, having failed in commerce, are taking six fine boys to Van Dieman's Land, But Mr. — would have as his present secretary (who is not unlikely to be hereafter governor) a personal friend.

"What I am chiefly afraid of is, using up to no purpose resources which, properly applied, might prove seed-corn, and produce (D.V.) an abundant, or at least a sufficient harvest; but these resources we may never be able to get again.

"Of course you will tell me when to pay in my hundred guineas. I did not do it, because I conceived the money of all the contributors was to be paid only if enough should be raised to effect, not the whole of what you wished, but enough of it to warrant the application of the sums promised. Please inform me by return of post if I ought to pay in my 100 guineas.

"My dear Sir, once for all, never in any case use ceremony with me. It is useful only to keep people off, to whom we do not like to approximate. But the closer I get to you, the better. Poor Mr. and Mrs. B——! may the Almighty bless them! What an alternative does a Christian's hope present!

"Farewell, my dear Sir, ever sincerely yours,
"W. WILBERFORCE."

"I hope all your family are well, and I desire my best respects. I would send you Lord Calthorpe's letter, but for its containing secret matter.

"*The Rev. Mr. Leifchild.*"

That two men socially so far apart, should mutually be so closely attracted, is worthy of notice. That the parliamentary orator, then in the height of his fame, and then mingling familiarly with the nobles of the land, should write to a dissenting minister, "The closer I get to you the better," is equally creditable to them both, and a high testimony to the power of Christian principle. Never did Mr. Wilberforce fail to attend to any request from my father, and never did my father make a request that was not worthy of attention. In the greatest pressure of his public and private business, Mr. Wilberforce courteously and carefully responded to the minister's applications, as the following letter to my father will prove:—

"BATTERSEA RISE, *December 20th, 1822,*
"11 o'clock a.m.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Your messenger was (strange to say it) just gone, when the first thing I did on coming into the house, before I washed my hands, &c., for dinner, though it was waiting, was to write to you; and when the butler took down the note to deliver to him, the butler declares he sent it to him, at the moment being himself employed at the dinner table. I am a little at a loss what to do, partly thinking you might execute your kind intention of coming here, but I can wait here no longer, having business of a pressing nature to do in town. Could you favour me with a call at my son's lodgings, at No. 25, Brompton Row, at a little after three o'clock? My brother lives wide of Kensington, or he would call on you. If it be very inconvenient, I will try to do it at three quarters past three. Though I dare not promise; indeed I am afraid of exposing myself to the weather. I scribble in extreme haste, but ever with cordial regard I am

"Very truly yours,

"*The Rev. Mr. Leifchild.*"

"W. WILBERFORCE."

The annexed observations by my father on Mr. Wilberforce will complete the notice of that good and great man, and will show him as he was at home as well as abroad.

"Mr. Wilberforce was an occasional attendant on my ministry at Kensington. He used to send for me to his house, to consult

with me on particular subjects. I found him a most fidgetty little man, doing several things at once; stooping down on his knees to seal a letter at the table, and talking all the while about household affairs to Mrs. Wilberforce; sending out messages to the persons waiting in the hall; then apologizing to me, and requesting me to remind him what he had sent to me for. I wondered how he could get through the various concerns entrusted to him with the ability and success which distinguished him. I did not trouble him much, as I always hated dangle upon the great.

"He was accustomed to take laudanum medicinally. I have seen him nodding through its effects while in the chair at a Bible meeting, and once as if assenting to the remarks of a speaker, who was complimenting him upon his incessant activity. Yet he would sum up the whole as if he had paid the most diligent attention to the speakers.

"I once ventured to request him to appear oftener amongst us, to encourage others. 'Gladly would I,' said he, 'for my own sake; but I should lose *caste* with the Church, which is my sphere of usefulness;'—as if the name of Methodist had not been universally applied to him. Yet he was a most generous man, and gave me one hundred pounds at once in a case of benevolence (that of C. B.) and wrote letters to others, including one to Henry Drummond. He concealed many such acts from Mrs. Wilberforce. Once I applied to him to obtain a Government situation for a deserving young man, when he replied, solemnly and emphatically, 'I never yet asked a favour from any ministry, being determined to keep myself free.'

"He used to come from Bath to Bristol when I was settled there, but it was to hear Robert Hall. He wrote to me apologizing for not coming to hear me, and for not going to hear Mr Jay at Bath, as he had formerly done, on account of the prejudice it would excite against him—his sons having gone into the Church."

The circle of the Independent minister's hearers and friends was

now observably widening, and included one or two highly intelligent young men, some of whom in after life became influential. Of the most eminent of these the minister thus writes:—

“Mr., afterwards Serjeant, and finally Justice Talfourd, was a frequent attendant upon my ministry during the time he was studying in the Temple. His relatives and friends lived beyond us, towards Hammersmith; and as he was repairing to them on Sabbath mornings, he tarried with us by the way, and returned to chapel with his mother and her friends in the evening. I held long discussions with him on the sentiments of the Unitarians, which he had then imbibed, but with no good effect. Yet he has unvaryingly shown me attention and kindness, and wrote two reviews of me as a preacher—one in the ‘London Magazine’ for March, 1821, which is too extravagant an eulogium to be just. I had lost the magazine, but he had not; and when he was a Queen’s Counsel he lent it to me, that it might be copied.”

As this is the only printed critique on my father as a preacher at that time, and as it was penned by a gentleman who subsequently attained to great literary as well as legal eminence, some extracts from it will be acceptable. The article is entitled, “Pulpit Oratory—The Rev. John Leifchild;” and the paragraphs which most strictly appertain to the subject of the sketch are those here subjoined.

“The individual whom we have chosen as the subject of this notice has scarcely yet attained that eminence among his fellows which his talents deserve. Of all professors of Calvinism whom we have ever heard, he seems to us its most fitting champion. He alone has displayed strength to cut the knot of its mysterious difficulties, to exhibit its doctrines in all their austere grandeur, and to wield its terrible artillery.

“Mr. Leifchild is one of those who feels ‘the future in the instant.’ He has almost as intense a consciousness of the world to come as he has of the visible objects around him. He speaks not only as believing, but as *seeing* that which is invisible. The torments of the hell which he discloses are as palpable to his mind as the sufferings of a convict stretched on a rack by a human torturer. He speaks as if he and his hearers stood visibly on this ‘end and

shoal of time,' with the glories of heaven above him, and the eternal abyss beneath, and on the reception of his living words the doom of all who heard them were at the moment to be fixed for ever. He makes audible to the heart the silent flight of time, so that the wings of the hours seem to rustle as they pass by with fearful sound.

* * * * *

"In the description of dying scenes, Mr. Leifchild is too frequently tempted to dwell on circumstances which border on the physically shocking. When he abstains from this, he is absolutely fearful. We remember once hearing him, at the close of a striking description of the alarm felt by a sinner at the approach of death, exclaim in a wild tone, 'His friends rush to him—he is gone!' then with a solemn impressiveness add, '*He is dead!*' and at last, in a voice that came on the ear like low thunder, pronounce, '*He is damned!*' The effect was petrifying and withering. It seemed as though he had actually witnessed, while he spoke, the passage of a soul into eternity, and the sealing of its irrevocable doom.

"He sometimes appears to us to regard the *manner* of death as too accurate a test of character; but he is surely justified in attempting to arrest attention by those circumstances of mortality which have so profound an interest to all that are mortal. Who does not feel the truth of these words of the time-honoured poet?"—

'He that no more may stay is listened more
Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose;
More are men's ends marked than their lives before—
The setting sun, and music at the close.
As the last taste of sweets is sweetest last,
Lives in remembrance more than things long past.'

"Notwithstanding the enthusiasm which breathes through Mr. Leifchild's discourses, they are full of thought, observation, and knowledge, both of history and Biblical criticism. His sentences are for the most part short and individually striking. Where he is best, they follow each other like strokes upon a wedge, each adding to the effect of the other until they can rive the knotted oak.

"His manner of level speaking is slovenly, sometimes bordering on the familiar; but when he is aroused he pours forth a torrent of voice and energy, and sustains it without intermission to the end. His whole soul seems thrown into every word. He does not stop to explain his expressions, or give all the qualifications to his doctrines which he might think requisite in a confession of faith, but gives full vent to the predominant feeling, and allows no other to check

its course, which in every kind of oratory is wise. He thus occasionally, it is true, rushes headlong against some tremendous stumbling-block, or approaches that fine division where the pious borders on the profane. But, on the whole, the greatest effect is produced by this abandonment to the honest impulse of the season.

"There are a few minor defects in Mr. Leifchild's composition and manner, which, however, are not worthy of particular remark. Indeed, they all spring so evidently from his earnestness in the cause to which he is devoted, that we can scarcely desire their removal. Of the opinions of his fellow-men he appears almost careless. There is no false fire, no self-seeking, no mingling of personal desires in his zeal. Others may use their power to more advantage, in obtaining popular applause; but there is no one whom we have heard, the inspiration of whose eloquence appeared to arise from a deeper or holier fountain."

Such a testimony as the above will be acknowledged to be the more important when it is remembered that the writer differed from the preacher in some essential doctrinal views; and it is pleasant to add that Serjeant Talfourd, the author of "*Ion*," did not forget the friend and minister of his early days. I remember that my father told me, upon his return from the Serjeant's house in Russell Square, where he had been on one occasion dining, that this then well-known orator of the law courts had relaxed and refreshed himself by referring to the old Kensington days, and the old chapel, and, singularly enough, the old hymns of Dr. Watts, which he had once rather disdained. "Do you remember," said he to my father, "how we used to sing that hymn—one of Watts's best—

'When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count my loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride?'

"And do you remember how heartily we used to join in the last verse—

'Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.'

Thus did the London lawyer and the London minister again meet and discourse of hymns and sermons still faithfully remembered; and thus did the man who was rapidly rising to high legal honours delight to converse with the man who had already attained to the summit of his earthly ambition—viz., ample scope for self-sacrifice; for the consecration of no common powers to the service of the Judge of all; and for the exercise of his whole faculties in pleading the cause of righteousness and the claims of the Redeemer of mankind.

The Independent minister's chief extraneous labour at Kensington was in connexion with public societies, and especially the Bible Society. He founded and fostered the "Kensington Auxiliary Bible Society," and in working, collecting funds, and speaking for it, came into contact with several celebrated personages of that day and that locality,* to some of whom slight reference is made in these pages. He also advocated the claims of the Society at one or two of its anniversaries, held in the Queen's Concert Rooms, in the Haymarket, London. In this way he became acquainted with and personally noticed by the Dukes of Kent and Sussex. Twice the Duke of Sussex was in the chair; and once the Duke complimented him on his address, and asked him where he preached at Kensington. The then comparatively obscure dissenting minister might excusably feel a little flattered by this royal attention and interest, and a little off his guard in an immediate reply. "I was induced," says he, "very improperly, to say that we should feel honoured by his Royal Highness's presence. 'Get a sermon,' said the kindly Duke, 'by my friend Dr. Collyer, for the Queen's Lying-in Hospital, and I will come.' But," adds the minister in his notebook, "I thought better of it;" and, as he elsewhere wrote, "I always hated dangling on the great."

* Some of the subscribers bore well-known names. Amongst them was that of Mrs. George Canning, the wife of the celebrated statesman, George Canning.

Not only had my father the honour of conversing with a royal duke, but while at Kensington he was introduced to royalty itself. He must be allowed to narrate the event in his own words:—"I was one of the ministers of the three denominations, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Independent, who proceeded to Carlton Palace, Pall Mall, with an Address of Congratulation to the Prince Regent upon his accession to the throne as George the Fourth. We were a motley group, of various dimensions, dresses, and appearance. We advanced in a somewhat confused manner through a long room, with noblemen in waiting on each side, like statues, to the king, who was seated on a low throne at the further end. He was lusty, pappy, and pale, in a kind of uniform, and with a cocked hat, which on our approach he took off with inimitable gracefulness.

"Dr. Rees, our senior, a Presbyterian, and a fine-looking man, read the address. The king's air of supineness had given way to a mirthful smile, as he saw the satisfaction on our countenances when we were admitted to the royal presence. At the close of the address he read a brief reply, and then unexpectedly addressed us *impromptu* in these words:—"The manner in which you have spoken of my late revered father must touch every heart, and none more than my own (laying his hand upon his breast). You may assure yourselves, gentlemen, of a continuance, while I sway the sceptre, of all the privileges you enjoyed under his auspicious reign." To this we had almost audibly said, 'hear, hear.'

"When the king was informed that we waived the usual privilege of *all* kissing hands on account of the fatigue it would occasion him, and that as twelve only of the clergy had been permitted to do so, six only of our number would be selected for the honour, he smilingly observed, 'O you may *all* kiss hands.' Upon this we all fell in a most humiliating posture on our knees to kiss his extended hand. Some of those who were large and aged men, especially Doctors Rees and Waugh, had great difficulty in rising, and retired backwards in some confusion,

not being accustomed to such a movement. As we retired, the king said to us, 'You may stay in the adjoining room till I return.'

"While waiting there we saw a small deputation of Quakers advancing with an address, which one of their number held before him in a frame. One of the pages coming towards them to take off their hats, Dr. Waugh, who loved a joke, said to the foremost Quaker in an audible whisper, 'Persecution, brother;' to which the brother significantly replied, while pointing upwards, 'Not so bad to take off the hat as the head.' We saw the king again as he returned in procession, and we departed well pleased. I believe we were all remarkable loyal in our prayers the next Sunday."

It was not exclusively to the Bible Society that my father directed his own attention or that of his congregation. The London Missionary Society also held a high place in his regard, and had a large share of his co-operation. Not only did he attend its public meetings and promote its interests from the pulpit, but he also took an interest in those details of its management which are so much less attractive than platform displays or public sermons. He looked closely into its operations, and ventured his opinion on those which he thought defective. Thus he commented on some proposition of Rowland Hill's in so practical a spirit that Mr. Hill saw his ability, and addressed to him the following letter, written in a very legible hand, and as pointedly as legibly. This letter contains sentences quite characteristic of the writer, and the whole displays in a favourable light Rowland Hill's sound common-sense.

"SURREY CHAPEL, *Saturday Evening*.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I thank you for your remarks on my memorial. The more I consider the present state of the Missionary Society, as it respects her wide-extended calls among the uncivilised inhabitants of the earth, the more I am convinced that the present plan for training missionaries for *that* cause is defective and radically

* No date, but the water-mark of the paper is 1810.

wrong, and liable to produce among us those future evils which we have already had sufficient cause to lament.

" You properly observe that the expenses we are at in fitting out bad missionaries, exclusive of the injury done to the sacred cause, abundantly outweighs the expense of any plan to prevent it; but according to your letter, this plan seems to be grossly misunderstood, as the waggons, horses, and all such other implements or husbandry might be needed in the plan I have proposed, supposing that a farm of at least five hundred acres would be required to give a proper insight into such agricultural improvements as would be necessary for a useful missionary amongst uncivilised tribes. For the sake of *Londoners*, perhaps, I should have been more explicit. I possess about 15 acres around my country abode at Wotton. From this very little farm we in some measure live, or might live, within ourselves. Two labourers are found quite sufficient to attend on these little concerns, and a very few acres added to this would be quite sufficient for all the practical instruction that would be needed, and furnish almost every necessary of life, at least forty per cent. cheaper than can be obtained either in London or Gosport, or in any other *boarding* place that can be mentioned. One horse and an Irish or such cart, are abundantly better contrivances than our clumsy English carts, and would be all that is necessary. If a little plough were wanted, which in little farms is in general borrowed, all the better. No missionaries should be sent where Mr. Campbell * has been without first receiving instruction how to make and use these simple implements of husbandry. All the extra servants that could be wanted would be but one intelligent bailiff, who might teach bricklayers, carpenters, &c., to be doubly useful in having a general knowledge of everything that might prove in a plain way to the comfort and convenience of social life.

" Turn a carpenter into a corn field, and he knows not what he is to be at. Tell a bricklayer to work in the garden, he is all confusion. And yet in a few weeks the carpenter and the bricklayer will soon be instructed in husbandry also, and how to use the spade, so as will answer every end that can be required. Such a man will be a greater blessing to uncultivated tribes than if he had, with the grace of God in his heart, twenty languages, and the knowledge of twice as many sciences all at his finger's ends. If *Londoners* cannot understand this, let them go into any little country farm at a distance,

* The missionary to the Hottentots.

and they will soon understand what I mean. Now this I do not pretend to say, that every unfit character will certainly be discovered by such a plan. Yet I will say many would have been, and still will be detected under a closer inspection and more watchful examination, while the objection started against such an economy appears to be the principal argument in its favour—namely, that when a variety of such persons are collected together, they would only be calculated to excite a light and trifling spirit amongst themselves. Be it so; the sooner such a spirit is discovered, so much the better. They are utterly unfit for us, and would ultimately prove a fatal curse to the sacred cause. I hope when the Directors meet again, you will be there to explain my meaning for me, as I would wish to leave them to an entire freedom of debate. I am persuaded my views are correct, and I shall be very sorry if a want of attention to that which relates to the fundamental business of the Society prevents me from being less warm and affectionate to the interest of the Society than hitherto I have been.

“Yours affectionately,

R. HILL.

“P.S.—There are some, as it is commonly expressed, that know how to turn their hands to everything; but these don't live in London. A cockney carpenter in London is a sort of half-way gentleman on a Sunday, and knows nothing beyond his own calling. Not so the country mechanic. Many of these are under the necessity of knowing for their own advantage a little of everything, and as such useful knowledge is acquired at a very easy rate, it is surprising that any should suppose that such an economy should prove an expensive charge.

“*Rev. J. Leifchild, Kensington.*”

In 1817, Mr. Leifchild received an invitation to preach one of the annual sermons for the London Missionary Society. The letter of application, written by the Rev. George Burder, shows the estimation in which the minister at Kensington was then held by his brethren.

“MISSIONARY ROOMS, 20th Feb., 1817.

“DEAR SIR,—Your readiness to promote the missionary cause has always been apparent, and an opportunity now presents itself of serving it in an essential manner. The Committee of Examination

have long been looking out for suitable ministers to preach their annual sermons next May, and had fixed on Dr. Chalmers and Mr. James—the latter having been lately afflicted with a determination of blood to the head, is forbidden by his medical friend and others from venturing on any extra work which might excite his animal frame too much; he has therefore been constrained to decline the service.

“Under these circumstances the brethren last Monday unanimously agreed to request that you would do the Society the favour to give them a sermon (at Tottenham Court).”

“As this is evidently the call of Divine Providence to plead the cause of Christ and of millions of dying men, I trust you will not permit a false modesty to interpose and form an excuse. You are not your own, but the Lord’s; you are, in the estimation of your brethren, qualified for the work. A London brother is always expected to be one of the four preachers. Come forward, then, my dear brother, surmount your feelings, and in a true missionary spirit say, ‘Here am I—employ me.’”

“A line soon will oblige

“Your affectionate brother,

“GEORGE BURDER, *Secretary.*”

“*Rev. Mr. Leifchild.*”

In his reply to this honourable invitation, Mr. Leifchild expressed his reluctance to accept the proposition, and pleaded a pressure of ministerial engagements. Afterwards, however, within the Kensington period, he preached *the* Missionary Sermon at Surrey Chapel, on which he remarks:—

“Being called to preach before the London Missionary Society at Surrey Chapel, I distrusted my memory, and resolved to read what I had written; but having made trial of the method beforehand at my own place, its contrast with my usual mode so displeased my people that their remonstrance induced me to change my purpose. I have never read a *sermon* from the pulpit since, nor even read notes. I have ever found the observation true that ‘the memory is a faithful friend, and loves to be trusted.’”

Amongst the manuscripts relating to this period, I find one

entitled, "Address at the Ordination of Missionaries, delivered at the Ordination of Messrs. Threlkeld and Ellis for Otaheite. Kensington, Nov. 8th, 1815." This ordination is now interesting in connexion with the success of one of these two persons, the Rev. William Ellis, so well known as missionary to the South Sea Islands, and as the more recent author of a volume on Madagascar. The manuscript denotes a careful composition and greater elaboration than was afterwards employed in such performances. Mr. Leifchild's character for efficiency in the pulpit at this time appears from several references to have continued on the increase, notwithstanding his indisposition to preach set public sermons.

Among the letters of the Kensington period now remaining, is one from the celebrated Baptist minister, Robert Hall, in answer to some application to preach at Kensington. It is interesting in one respect, which may be noticed after its perusal.

"September 16th, 1823.

"DEAR SIR,—My knowledge of your character is such, though I have not the honour of a personal acquaintance, as would completely supersede the necessity of any additional enforcement of a request you might please to make, were it within the compass of practicability.

"But circumstanced as I now am, I am under the painful necessity of declining your very kind and respectful invitation. It is not my intention to stay out more than the second Lord's day in October, which I must spend at Cambridge.

"It is, at the same time, a pleasure to me to reflect that the vicinity of the metropolis will supply an ample choice of persons in all respects equally qualified with myself (and I might say more so) to perform the service you desire. To any public engagements in London, or its vicinity, I have an insuperable objection.

"I am, dear Sir, with much esteem,

"Yours most respectfully,

"ROBERT HALL."

Little did the writer and the receiver of this letter (unusually clear and legible for Robert Hall) at that time conceive, that in the course of a few years there would be no two ministers in

the city of Bristol more intimately acquainted and more distinguished by mutual esteem than Robert Hall and John Leifchild.

Mr. Leifchild's friendships at Kensington were not exclusively with ministers and the professedly religious. He also enjoyed acquaintance with a few literary and intellectual men, not originally or entirely of his own way of thinking in creed and church. Amongst these were Charles Lloyd the poet, and the friend of Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Lamb. Mr. Lloyd, though now almost unknown to fame, was in his day admitted into the circle of the Lake Poets, and De Quincey has referred to him in his biographical sketches of Coleridge and Wordsworth. Coleridge dedicated one of his poems to Lloyd "on his proposing to domesticate with the author," styles him "dearest Lloyd," and evidently highly esteemed him. His poetical works consist of a translation of Alfieri's Tragedies, and original poems entitled *Titus and Gisippus*, &c., together with a volume of sonnets. Most of these books he gave to my father, and some of them with his autograph.

My father's notice of this poet and his family is as follows:—

"I formed a friendship at Kensington with Charles Lloyd, the son of a banker at Birmingham. He was a good poet, and had come with his wife and family to reside in our neighbourhood. He was much interested in my preaching, and by it, as he admitted, became decided in his views of Christian doctrine.

"He was of a pensive turn of mind, and subject to great mental depression. He called upon me so often, hoping to relieve his melancholy by conversation with me, that I found it difficult to afford him all the attention he desired. In his person, his genius, temperament, and scholarship he seems to me, in a marked degree, to resemble the poet Cowper.

"His wife was a superior woman, and had been brought up in the school of Socinianism, but was influenced by the preaching of Mr. James, of Birmingham, and adopted evangelical senti-

ments, until she changed them for those of the Friends or Quakers. When I argued with her, and showed her the unsoundness of the Quaker's views on the subject of Inspiration, she interrupted me by saying—'Pray, Sir, do not unsettle me again; I have at length gained quietude on religious matters, and I wish to remain in it.'

"Mr. Lloyd consulted me about his publications, and presented me with copies of them when printed; also with one in manuscript. They are more metaphysical than poetical, and would just suit such a genius as that of Coleridge. Mr. Lloyd had been previously subject to mental aberrations, and sometimes fell under their influence again. Once he thought God had bereft him of all his children, and had only permitted their shadows or vacant images to remain with him. While in such a condition of mind, he told me sorrowfully that he was afraid to attempt to embrace, or even touch his children, lest the pleasing illusion of their presence should be destroyed. He wrote poetry upon their imagined loss, which being published so deceived one of his reviewers, that he sympathised with the father in his bereavement. It was remarkable that he in part recovered by taking lodgings in Fleet Street, and living amidst a crowd of noisy persons, and rapidly changing objects.

"For some time before I left Kensington he was unhappily again restrained in some asylum, and I know not what became of him in the end. I did not like to question his wife and daughters, who remained some time in the neighbourhood. But on my asking her kindly one day, if her husband continued long in the same state of mind, what would be her course of conduct, she looked fixedly at me, and replied, 'When you, dear Sir, have known life as I know it, you will see the wisdom of the charge—Take no thought for the morrow; sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.'"

In perusing some of Mr. Lloyd's very friendly letters to my father, I find in one the following passage:—

"April, 1823.

"I cannot forget your kindness to me in my illness, though I availed myself of it less than I might have done. It is the only illness of that sort I ever had, in which, after the first paroxysm had subsided, all my mental impressions were delightful. I scarcely ever enjoyed myself more than I did after the first three weeks of that illness. Particularly my religious feelings amounted almost to rapture. But I have dearly paid for it since."

This letter he thus affectionately concludes—

"How is your health? How is that of Mrs. Leifchild? Is your mother living yet, and how are your sisters? Pray remember me most kindly to all of these individuals. What is become of the Rev. Mr. Smith, of Hammersmith? I should be very glad to hear from you. Believe me ever your obliged and

"Faithfully affectionate friend,

"C. LLOYD, JUN."

We may readily conceive that Coleridge would have found much delight in the company of a poet so unaffected, and so affectionate as Charles Lloyd; and as we read the beautiful poem above referred to, we can enter into the sentiments of the far greater of these two poets, when he sings—

"There while the prospect through the gazing eye
Pours all its healthful greenness on the soul,
We'll laugh at wealth, and learn to laugh at fame,
Our hopes, our knowledge, and our joys the same,
As neighbouring fountains image each the whole:
Then when the mind has drunk its fill of truth,
We'll discipline the heart to pure delight,
Rekindling sober joys' domestic flame.
She whom I love, shall love thee—Honour'd youth,
Now may Heaven realize this vision bright."

After preaching on one occasion at Tooting, below Clapham Common, a brother minister, with whom he subsequently became most intimate, addressed and encouraged my father. This was the Rev. Joseph Hughes, the Baptist minister of Battersea, and, as far as such a matter can now be accurately determined, the

founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society ; certainly, he was its first secretary. On his friendship with this devoted and disinterested public servant my father thus writes :—

“ My acquaintance with Mr. Hughes was of very great service to me. Many were the walks we took together from his house at Battersea to that of Mrs. Wilkinson at Clapham, where we met a select party of clerical brethren, and discussed with them the texts we had preached from, and other subjects of a theological nature. Mr. Hughes’s elucidations were often very happy. His peculiarity was a stilted train of discoursing which deprived it of the familiarity of conversation. From my admiration, however, of him, this served to elevate my own style of thinking and preaching, which, perhaps, had contracted too much of a colloquial character.

“ He was peculiar in his texts, which were mostly taken from the Old Testament, and frequently from the Book of Proverbs. His method of preparing for the pulpit was somewhat similar to my own, but he could elaborate two sermons while returning from a tour on behalf of the Bible Society, and deliver them in the very words in which they had been wrought out in his mind. He was too fastidious in composition to write with fluency and force. There was nothing of the torrent in his style, but it flowed on like a clear, limpid, yet majestic stream. Mr. Foster, Robert Hall, and Mr. Jay, entrusted to him their manuscripts in proof, for revision. He was so provident of the future, that fearful of not being able to prepare well for the pulpit in advanced years, he composed and wrote out fully in large hand one hundred sermons for old age, which, however, he did not live to preach. Yet in another way his provident care was of great use, namely, in marking down the parts of Scripture he might wish to read, or have read to him, in time of sickness or affliction, as was actually done in his last illness.

“ I can truly say my intellect was more indebted to him than to any man I had then known. Our intercourse gave a new turn

and a new impulse to my mental character. It is well, on a review of life, as Mr. Foster observes, in his Essay upon a man's writing memoirs of himself, 'to trace the influence of circumstances and events in the formation of character;' and Mr. Hughes would have added, 'Man is built up on circumstances.'

Although, however, the one influenced the other, never were two men more strongly contrasted in manner and in temperament. Little, too, did Mr. Hughes then suspect that his friend was to be his biographer.

A copy of my father's first printed sermon lies before me, in which is written: "This first brought me acquainted with Mr. Hughes," probably in connexion with the preaching at Tooting. The sermon is entitled, "The Salvation of all Infants: a Sermon preached at Hornton-street Chapel, Kensington, August 19, 1810." At the commencement of it the author says: "I have no hesitation in saying that I feel the most entire confidence—the most cheerful persuasion of the salvation of *all* who die in infancy. And I have no doubt of being able to produce arguments that will amply justify this persuasion." He founds his persuasion on scriptural passages, especially on his text, Mark x. 13—16, and combats all the principal objections in detail. The discourse manifests research, thought, and logical acumen; but nothing of the impulsive eloquence for which he was afterwards, and it appears even at this time, in some degree, distinguished. Its best eulogium is, that from its perusal some bereaved mothers were known to derive much comfort.

In referring to his second published sermon he remarks in his private notes:—

"I was never very ambitious of appearing in print, or of having my likeness in the periodicals, or of writing long letters to be perused by others, and preserved for publication after my decease. Few such from me will be found any where. Indeed, letter-writing has been my aversion all through life."

"I printed one sermon while at Kensington, on 'The Evil

and Danger of Fickleness in Religious Opinions,' at the request of the ministers of the 'Monthly Association,' before whom it was preached. It was favourably received and reviewed, but I found it a *losing concern*; and this latter circumstance prevented me from complying with several similar requests after public occasions." The author was amused to hear from his publisher, that in accordance with the usual brevity of booksellers' collectors, this sermon was commonly inquired for in Paternoster-row under the title of "Leifchild's Fickleness."

It was at Kensington, also, that Mr. Leifchild published his first volume of sermons, entitled the "Christian Temper; or, Lectures on the Beatitudes." It was well received by the public, and reached a second edition. Even the booksellers' collectors must now have conceived a better opinion of the author, for their brief inquiry in this case was not for "Leifchild's Fickleness," but "Leifchild's Christian Temper."

A curious coincidence also showed that these discourses were approved out of the author's immediate circle. This shall be presented in his own words:—

"I remember a singular circumstance in reference to it. Some years afterwards, when I had come to reside in London, on one occasion being too unwell to preach at my own place, I repaired for worship in the evening to a sanctuary where I was less likely to be noticed than in one of my own denomination. I resolved to go to Great Queen Street Chapel, near Lincoln's Inn Fields; but being late, and seeing an Episcopal Chapel in my way, I entered in and seated myself on a form with a man of humble guise. The sermon was about to commence, and the text taken was, 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' I was struck with the exordium, and it seemed very familiar to me. I soon recollected that it was part of my own printed sermon on this passage in my volume on the Beatitudes. The whole sermon, indeed, was mine, though much shortened. The sentiments never appeared to me to so great advantage;

but this might arise from the place and manner in which they were read.

"I saw that the attention of my humble companion was riveted, and during the sermon tears of sympathy with the mourner described rolled down his cheek; but when in the latter part of the discourse the promise of comfort was dwelt upon his countenance was lighted up with hope and joy. I was so pleased with the effect of my own discourse at second-hand, that I slipped half-a-crown into his hand to make sure that, in one sense at least, his comfort should be real.

"I afterwards understood that the whole course of my sermons was gone through at the same place." The chapel was that known as Long-acre Episcopal Chapel, once occupied by the Rev. Mr. Howels.

It is very little known that my father was the projector of the "Congregational Magazine," a periodical which for many years occupied a high place amongst the readers of the Congregational body of Christians. My father and Dr. Redford (then settled at Uxbridge) had long lamented the absence of a literary organ in their connexion, and were induced to embark jointly in this enterprise.* Four or five volumes appeared under this joint editorship, and include many excellent original papers, and some contributed by a few superior men who were friends of the editors. Thirty-two articles were written by my father in the first volume where he has marked them, and seven in the second volume.

He found, however, to his sorrow, that he not only gained no profit by the undertaking, but also gave little satisfaction to the parties whose books he reviewed. In order to carry on this work in connexion with the discharge of his other numerous duties, he was often compelled to work hard and long in the hours of the night—frequently, indeed, until two o'clock in the

* It was entitled "The London Christian Instructor; or, Congregational Magazine," and the first volume appeared in 1818.

morning. At length he was obliged to relinquish his editorial chair; and on reckoning his acquisitions in that seat, he found that he had secured nothing but that which he could never wholly free himself from, viz.,—a liver complaint. To the end of his long life he bore with him this monitor of his unwise nocturnal labours—and to the end of his days also the first five volumes of the “*Congregational Magazine*,” into which he often looked with grave recollections.

With reference to the minister’s principal aim at this period in the solitude of his study, he thus writes:—

“All my thoughts were directed to the formation of an efficient style for the pulpit, which was unfavourable to composition for the press. How few have been found to excel in both! while some, by attempting both, have been prevented from excelling in either. Of the numerous sermons published by popular preachers at that period, how few are now read, while multitudes have been consigned to oblivion, and are known at most only by their titles.

“I made myself master of Lord Bacon’s “*Advancement of Learning*,” Enfield’s “*History of Philosophy*,” Sir Thomas Brown’s Works, particularly his “*Religio Medici*,” Dugald Stewart’s “*Mental Philosophy*,” Paley’s “*Natural Theology*,” Du Bosc’s Sermons in French; Saurin’s Dissertations and Sermons; several articles in the “*Encyclopædia Britannica*,” and in the “*Eclectic Review*,” which periodical I read with avidity, it being then in its palmy days. But no work that I then met with interested me equally with Foster’s “*Essays*,” and afterwards his “*Popular Ignorance*.” If I wanted to abstract my mind, I used to read Foster, and I never found this method fail. Likewise, Dr. Chalmer’s Sermons on the Astronomical Argument greatly fascinated me. When in the north, I sought out the spot where he first resided and became converted. A charming woman in the neighbourhood gave me a most minute narration concerning him.”

X

SECTION II.

It was at Kensington that Mr. Leifchild secured, in 1811, the greatest temporal blessing of his long life—an invaluable wife. The details of their acquaintance and subsequent courtship can hardly be introduced here, yet they were not without considerable interest even to unimpassioned spectators. It was indeed strange that a lady who was born in India, shipwrecked in her infancy, and who had been with difficulty rescued from the deep and borne on a sailor's back to the shores of one of the Nicobar Isles, should be spared by the waves of the sea to be conveyed, as it were, by the waves of chance to the door of a chapel at Kensington. Strange, too, was it that though residing on her father's estate in Scotland, he should be influenced to place her at school in Kensington. Strange that after her school days she should return from Scotland to take up her abode in the same neighbourhood. Strange that she should ultimately find herself the wife of the minister who had found her as his hearer. There was some romance about all this, or as she and her husband called it, "Providence." They came together from almost the ends of the world—they came together across distant and tempestuous seas—and let no one blame them if in their early days of union they thought they had been made for each other, and that the very waves had spared the one, and the winds blown the other to that remote and quiet corner of the great world—Hornton-street, Kensington.

But let the husband himself speak a word or two about this matter:—"I had been a widower for some years, and had no thoughts of again marrying, though I had many opportunities. But after I had been settled a few years, Miss Stormonth, eldest daughter of John Farquhar, Esq. (who had changed his name on succeeding to an entailed estate near Forfar in Scotland, and had then recently deceased), came on a visit to the house of a friend

who attended my chapel. She was born in India, brought up in Scotland, and educated at Kensington. In that very chapel where I preached she had received her first religious impressions.

"I was struck with her personal appearance. I found her sensible, pious, and prudent, and the saying proved false in my case that we can love truly only once. After some delay we were married, in the year 1811, at Stepney Church, near which some of her friends then resided. We chose June 4th for our wedding day, because it was the King's (George IV.) birthday, and was therefore always attended by a ringing of joyous bells. On our return from the church to the house of her friends, I called for a Bible and read in it, and then knelt down and implored a blessing upon our union, much to the surprise and perplexity of our host, who was quite unaccustomed to domestic religious services."

On the very day of their marriage they had a narrow escape and an evil omen. Proceeding in a hired chaise to Gravesend, the horse suddenly fell down with disease. The happy pair were at once and unceremoniously ejected. Their place was not now a bed of roses, but the vulgar dust of a common road. The horse recovered and they returned to their seats, not hurt, and but little discomfited. The ill omen was not verified. They "fell out" often perhaps again, but only once out of a vehicle, and not long together out of temper.

The only other time when they actually fell out of a vehicle was during a journey in Scotland. The husband thus relates the event:—

"I had a signal instance of preservation in danger when I went with Mrs. Leifchild and her sister Emily to the Falls of the Clyde, near Lanark. We hired a one-horse conveyance (phaeton, they called it) from Glasgow to carry us to the Falls and to convey us back. I apprised the owner and lender of the concern of our intention, and begged for a good horse, a sound vehicle, and strong harness, for I knew some parts of the road would be very steep and craggy.

"We had visited the Falls and had returned safely to Lanark, from which town we proceeded towards Hamilton, where we intended to pass the night. Soon after we left Lanark we descended a steep hill, having a wall and hedge on the left hand, and a terrible precipice on the right, leading down to a deep and woody glen, where in some large fissures it is said Wallace and his men often lay concealed.

"Although I proceeded very slowly and cautiously, the momentum of the vehicle increased and pressed so heavily on the horse that the harness which kept it from touching him suddenly broke, and the whole weight came upon the animal with a force which threw him down and threw us out! Most mercifully we fell upon the side opposite the precipice, and thus were saved from death. On recovering from the fall, I found great difficulty in extricating the horse and raising him up. He remained at first motionless as though dead. A gentleman and his female companion were passing us in the direction of Lanark, and paused to look on at us. I craved his assistance, which he declined to afford, saying, 'I am na' used to sic things.'

"My sister-in-law, Emily, with great spirit now helped me to free the horse, when, upon touching him with the whip, he started up and at once moved off and began munching some grass, which grew upon the top of the side-wall. The gentleman now proffered his help, which I at once declined, adding that a lady had assisted me while he looked on idly. We proceeded, by patching and tying up the harness, to Hamilton, where the whole equipage was pronounced crazy and rotten, and unfit for service."

In order to class all the vehicular ejections and dangers together, another incident, fortunately falling short of an accident, may be here introduced, also in the minister's own words:—

"I met with what I must deem a providential interposition—Mr. Swallow of Maidenhead, lent us a horse and chaise to go up from his house, where we had been staying, to Kensington, with the view of returning to Maidenhead the next day. On

entering Maidenhead in the evening, Mrs. Leifchild being in the chaise with me, and my son, then a little child, between us, our little horse was disturbed at hearing the horn and rattling wheels of a mail-coach close behind us. He took fright at the entrance of the town and galloped beyond the power of restraint. I managed to motion to the mail coachman behind to pull up, but in vain. I then recollected that there was a sharp turning from the road to the horse's stable, and supposed that he would take it and overturn us. He did take it, and in his terror approached so near to a post at the corner that I feared we must all be dashed to pieces. A strong impulse moved me to strike him on the side of his head with the handle of the whip; I did so, and we cleared the post by a hair's breadth."

To bring the three preceding narratives together we have anticipated the course of married life, and must now go back to the honeymoon and the first Sabbath in it. This was spent at Penshurst, the beautiful little village near Tunbridge in Kent. Even then and there the newly-made husband preached, though only to a rustic congregation. Several years afterwards a man travelled all the way from Penshurst to Kensington, simply, as he affirmed, to discourse with my father and inform him that his Penshurst sermon had been the means of the man's conversion. This was indeed a fortunate omen of a fortunate ministerial marriage—though long unknown. In the decline of his days the widower went once more to Penshurst, and wept there as he mused upon the bride of his early manhood, now a saint in Paradise; nor did he there forget the man who had been the seal to his ministry even on the day of his simple exhortation.

That this was a well-assorted marriage, all who knew anything of it at once admitted. Never were a pair more likely to live together in holy harmony. They loved each other devotedly, and they lived together devoutly. They had the best guarantee for lasting concord in the pursuit of an object far higher than mere mutual satisfaction. If they lived for each other, each

lived also to God, and nothing could break a chain of which the most numerous links stretched out into another world.

There were also many things in my mother which rendered her peculiarly adapted to my father. She held a creed similar to his, she was proportionably as active in all good works as he was, and both were benevolent to a fault. She believed her husband to be a superior preacher, and although this may be a common belief amongst minister's wives, yet it must be admitted that this one had an excuse for her belief in the concurrent opinion of other hearers. She was as attentive in the pew as in the parlour, and she knew sound doctrine as well as any hearer in the chapel.

I might mention several of her particular characteristics, but one only shall be noticed in this page, and that was her keen insight into human character at first acquaintance. In all the numerous companies in which she mingled during the course of her husband's public life, she generally at once detected the character of the principal personages, judging, it may be presumed, from the exterior, and by that ready tact which distinguishes the feminine mind. She was generally correct in such opinions, and the event commonly justified her strong liking, or dislike, as it might happen, for individuals. I can well remember with what distaste and with what expressive gesture she would occasionally say to her husband, after a first interview with some stranger, "I don't like that man," and very generally the future confirmed the justice of her judgment.

Was, then, this marriage union wholly undisturbed? Is it to be regarded as one of those bright pictures so often painted in biographies, where everything is idealised, and where the painter rather imitates the picturesque infidelity of a Turner, than the faithful homeliness of a Teniers? Did the united stream of my parents' lives flow on unruffled from the day of union to the day of deathly division? Unquestionably in the long view it ran on smoothly, but there were, as unquestionably, parts of its course where you might have heard murmurs not musical, and where

the bed of the river was encumbered with provoking obstacles—these, however, lay nearer to its source than to its ultimate out-flow. Their days of domestic difficulty came upon them soon after they came together; when the stream had flowed on for many years, its course lay through pleasant meadows, even though its waters became more languid.

There is no secret to withhold respecting these earlier difficulties. In truth, the pair had but the same lot as the majority of their fellow-Christians, although personal characteristics distinguished them, and these it may not be uninteresting to advert to.

While my parents agreed admirably over the Bible, they sometimes differed materially over the account-book. My father's heart was always large, but at this time his means were small; and what my mother complained of was, that he did not hold the latter fact in constant remembrance. She knew that he was a good preacher, and experienced that he was a bad financier. He abhorred all figures but those of speech, and the latter were too unsubstantial for the support of a household. He thought of his study and not of his kitchen—except at meal-times. He would prefer any book to his bank-book (a figure of speech, for in truth he never required one); and though not to be accused of extravagance, he certainly was chargeable with some thoughtlessness. This charge he would not acknowledge, or he would convert it into a commendable freedom from parsimony. Not only did he retain the same habits to the end of his days, but, curiously enough, he retained his palliations of them. I find in his autobiographical notes the following passage:—"I must not forget one peculiarity in my character, which perhaps I carried to an extreme—regardlessness of money and all saving habits. I found my wants always supplied, and, without being extravagant, I lived comfortably and cheerfully, not caring at all about the morrow or a future day. Upon any little sudden turn of good fortune, or any unexpected trifle coming into my possession, I looked upon it as a token that I might solace myself by recreation

from ordinary labour, and was never easy till I did so. I have thus enjoyed life, was always thankful to Providence, and always ready to help others. In the marriage-state I sought for love and union of souls, and was not influenced by mercenary considerations."

Most true is all this, and most true also that he carried these habits to an extreme. Parsimony is one pole, but his polarity was in the opposite direction. While he was resolved to "enjoy life," as he says, my poor mother had often to suffer in secret. While she would sum up figures he would sing a hymn. She too, on occasion, could join in the hymn, but he would not join in the sum. He trusted in Providence, and relied upon "the promises." She had to confront tradesmen who trusted no one, and who demanded other promises than those of Scripture. Here then was a contrast as well as a connubial union. The inevitable consequence was, that the wife broke in upon her little private store, and sadly diminished her own rightful substance.

What but this could be done under such circumstances? The present was imperious; the future might be, must be disregarded. Money *must* be found by the wife, as sermons must be composed by the husband. Sundays came round rapidly upon the latter, and Monday mornings as rapidly upon the former. The Bible was succeeded by the bill-book, and the one could no more be put aside than the other. A commentator helped my father in any difficulty in the one, but some much more practical helper was required for difficulties in the other. My mother has secretly told me that she was often envied in having a saint for a husband, while she was thinking that she would, at least in this world, have been better off with a sinner. Having taken a saint, she might at least be pardoned for wishing that the said saint had come under the obligation of fasting as well as that of comparative poverty.

Yet, in respect of the *res angusta domi*, let it be known that much might be said for my father. With an insufficient income there must needs be occasional discords; and the increase of his fame produced no increase in his fortune. Many of the poor

members of his church regarded him as rich, and the few rich members never considered that he might be poor. Like other men, too, and even more than most others, he had private drainings from the main channel, and these could not be stopped. He contributed to the support of his father and mother, and to the support of two or three sisters; to that also of others who had less claim but more clamorousness, not to speak of half a score of charities or societies. Where in these directions could he retrench? The claimants upon his bounty were remarkable for longevity,* and old age becomes increasingly exigent. *He* had no other resource than trust in Providence, and *they* had no other resource than trust in *him*. They never forgot him, nor the days on which he usually received his quarter's stipend. They were commendably punctual, while his careless, not to say criminal, paymaster was the reverse. The latter was far away, in Covent Garden, dealing in foreign fruit, while his poor minister was doubtful about even homely commodities. The paymaster often declared that he never could forget my father's sermons, but he very often forgot his necessities. Still, his dependents assured my father that Providence would never fail him, and were always ready to test the truth of their predictions.

It is, I think, not a little to his credit that amidst all these straits, demands and discouragements, he maintained an unblemished character, and discharged all his duties. He visited extensively, he studied closely, and preached acceptably. Yet he

* In a note in his pocket-book, dated May, 1857, he thus writes:—"My sister Mary died on the 17th of May, aged 78. Ever since the death of our parents, she and her sister have lived near to me, and have been supported jointly by myself and my brother, as we supported our father in his last days. We have been helped by the Almighty to do this." In another note he adds:—"We had the supreme satisfaction of soothing the last years of my dear parents. Many were their trials through life, and often they might have feared that the billows would overwhelm them as they neared the shore. Instead of this, all was smooth and tranquil; and the son whom they had comforted when young, was now a comfort to them in their old age. To God be the praise for the disposition as well as the ability."

has confided to me that at this period his heart often sank within him, and that but for religious principles he must have desponded. Nevertheless, he contrived to meet every pecuniary claim, and to discharge every just demand. To make two ends meet was his constant pecuniary struggle, and to keep all things straight was his perpetual geometrical problem. But he never absolutely wanted, and he never failed either as a son or brother, either as a husband or householder. How much assistance he received from his wife, and how little from others, may be readily inferred. They both indeed looked very gravely at difficulties, but afterwards very gratefully at deliverances.

While adverting to despondence and deliverance one event in the Kensington period occurs to my remembrance, which at the time became town-talk—this was the robbery of our house. My parents, with their usual trust in Providence, trusted an empty house on Sunday to all mischances. They thought it irreligious to detain the servant from the house of God simply to guard their own. On Sundays, therefore, the little house was locked up, and the servant seen in her pew at church or chapel. Disreputable people soon learnt this fact, and put Christian faith to a very severe test. My father had complimented his people on the amount (two or three hundred pounds) which they had contributed for the erection of galleries. For them it was a considerable sum, and the minister announced that he should send it to a banker's. Thieves began to inquire and to form opinions—one of which was, that the sum collected would not be sent to its destination until a few days afterwards. Luckily they were wrong, but still they broke through and stole.

The next Sabbath morning our house was, as usual, deserted by all but a little dog. My father was absent at Chatham, and his substitute preached a long sermon. To our dismay, on reaching home, we found that we had not been the first to enter the house. Every drawer, every cupboard, every box, had been ransacked; household goods lay in miserable confusion on the

floor, and everything was found in disorder, except our money, which, of course, was never found at all. My poor mother was in despair, the servant in tears, the dog asleep. This is nothing in narration, but it was terrible in reality. The wretches had even broken up our household idols, and abstracted family relics. Every article of plate was stolen, and our total loss was equal to £100. Who the thieves were was never certainly known, though shrewdly suspected. Bow-street officers could make no discovery, and in the end my father recovered nothing but his composure. With an empty purse he continued to trust all with Providence, except indeed an empty house. If this were a proof of distrust, then it must be admitted that ever afterwards somebody remained at home; and, whether remarkable or not, ever afterwards the house was unattempted by thieves.

Having thus candidly adverted to the lady who made the poetry of my father's life, and proved the most invaluable of coadjutors, I am reminded that the gallery of Kensington sketches would be incomplete without the addition of a few other females. Those only whose features were the most marked, and whose examples are most to be imitated or shunned, shall be exhibited.

Our next-door neighbours at one time presented the most decided and curious contrast. On the one side resided the Honourable Mrs. S. She was an eccentric widow, well connected, and had been a stanch Churchwoman; and when we came to dwell next door, she marvelled by what odd chance such odd fish as a dissenting parson and his wife should swim so near her. For some time she scrutinised us from her windows, and looked askance over the intervening garden-wall. She appeared to approve of all she could discover, except some of my childish pranks (for in this house I was born). Yet she took wonderfully even to me, after a time, and soon presented me with a small but sonorous drum, which I sadly disturbed the peace of the neighbourhood. She also followed, respecting the reception of which my father showed some delicacy. Some of these I once reluctantly

returned, on which occasion the kind but eccentric lady thus addressed me: "Keep them, or I'll lick you." Need I add, that I kept the toys? But these trifles had an object and an issue. Through the child she was approaching and approving the parents. She now began to converse with my father over the garden-wall. "What is it you believe, you dissenters?" inquired she. "Do you believe the Bible? Come, now, tell me plainly." This the dissenter did, much to her satisfaction, and somewhat to her surprise. Finding that he really believed and faithfully expounded the Bible, she ventured one Sunday morning into the chapel. My father, according to his wont, concluded his sermon with an earnest and pointed exhortation to Christian activity and works of usefulness.

The next morning Mrs. S. looked over the wall as my father was walking in his garden, and addressing him, exclaimed, "Leifchild, can I come in? I want to speak to you."

"Certainly, Mrs. S.," was the reply; and they were soon together in my father's parlour, when the following conversation took place, the lady commencing abruptly as follows:—

"Leifchild, I want a spade."

"A *spade*, madam!" exclaimed her neighbour, in astonishment.

"Yes—a spade," was the rejoinder.

"But, Mrs. S., your garden is always in good order."

"Nonsense! You know what I mean."

"Well, I will send the servant round with a spade."

"Nonsense! You know I do not mean that."

"Excuse me, Mrs. S.; I really do not know what you mean."

"Well, then, you frightened me yesterday by saying that very few were converted after fifty years of age, and I am now forty-nine. And then you spoke of the diligent husbandman, and said we must all set to work. Now, I mean to work, and that is why I want a spade."

"You shall have one, madam, and gladly, too. We have abundance of work, and shall be most thankful for your help."

The lady became a regular attendant at the chapel, and a zealous though still eccentric co-operator in works of benevolence. She endured some persecution, in consequence, from her high-church friends, who, upon her going into company, sneeringly inquired whether she had really become a Methodist.

"I have," replied the lady, boldly.

"What is it the Methodists do?" asked one.

"Come with me, and you shall see," answered the undaunted Mrs. S.

When Captain B., a relative of hers (a brother, I think), came home from India, she asked my father to meet him. But Captain B., though a polite, was not a religious man, and sorely tried the minister by repeatedly declaring his opinion that all religions were matters of age and country, and that, for his part, he thought the Brahmins very good men, and that they taught many truths. Seeing how this provoked my father, he proceeded to maintain that the sacred books of India were in every respect equal to the Scriptures; and to add, that really it was of little consequence what a man's creed was, his life being the only real test. Indeed, for his part, he thought the Brahmins better men than some of our clergy; he was sure they were more strict and more moral. In this strain he ran on until my father showed signs of running off, when Mrs. S. interposed decisively, and exclaimed, "Be quiet, B., or I'll lick you!" The captain smiled, and was instantly quiet. He could defy an enemy, but not Mrs. S.

There was no lady of more generous instincts in the whole of our Kensington circle; and not one esteemed my father more highly, or showed her esteem more oddly.

Our next-door neighbour on the other side was a perfect and painful contrast. Miss G. (her habits were not so good as her name) was a confirmed miser, though possessed of large means. Repulsive in her habits and her person, she nevertheless professed religion. She, too, liked my father, probably from his possession of qualities the extreme opposite of her own. She had proposed

to reside with him, and hinted that this might turn out to his future advantage. But if there were two things which my father disliked above most others, in connexion with domestic life, these were—restraint in his own house, and the suspicion of wishing to profit by the death of the miserly. Therefore Miss G. was politely yet decidedly declined. The next best thing, in her opinion, was to lodge next door, and this she managed to do, without, however, much advantage; for my father, though continually invited to spend the evening in her apartments, was always too much occupied. Once or twice, indeed, he went in, but it was only to warn the shrivelled inviter. In time she left the neighbourhood, and in time her fortune to a more compliant and more patient minister. For this benefit, however, he was compelled to endure many years of miserly companionship, which my father would have deemed poorly compensated by any number of pounds sterling. It is doubtful which of the two would have been the more wretched—himself or his lodger.

Another female portraiture bears some points of similitude, but it is far more impressive. At the distance of some four or five miles, in a busy but unsightly little town, resided Miss S. She, too, had heard my father with gratification and benefit, walking all the way to his chapel, and then back to B. She was a strong-minded and likewise a strong-footed lady, whose tastes lay in the direction of small chapels and large collections. She walked to Kensington, not only on Sundays, but also often on week-days, and would be found very early at our house, and very late at her own. She took up the minister's time, and wore out his patience. At his house she would often tarry all the day, and often dine at his table. Hints were lost upon her, and the broader they were the better she bore them. The unfortunate minister could not show the door to a lady, or shut it upon a Christian. She was ever requesting him to preach at B., or beg for B.; to collect money for her projects, or to listen to details of formidable length and utter insignificance. Others would not

listen to her, others would not entertain her—only the good-natured pastor in Hornton-street could be successfully assailed; and, better than all, he was a popular preacher.

He bore with her intrusions for many years—first, because she was nearly friendless; next, because he believed her to have the cause of God at heart. With a very scanty income, she did some good, and always had a chapel in the air before her. It would have been well for my father if the chapel had always and only been in the air; for from the time that it appeared on earth, in solid brick, his peace was gone, and Miss S. never would go.

It would have been quite as well, too, for my father, and moreover much better for herself, if Miss S. had always continued comparatively poor. Unhappily for both, she became unexpectedly rich. A cousin on whom she had attended in her last days left her, it was reported, about thirty thousand pounds; and the remainder of her life, together with its close, very impressively showed the necessity of the faithful pastor's frequent denunciations of needless hoarding. In sincere respect for him, and in delight in his ministry, she never varied during her whole life; but the sad and singular issue was, that her hand, so freely opened when it had little to bestow, tightened its grasp when it held much gold. She indulged, indeed, her old tastes in building a commodious chapel and school-room; but she was liberal to little effect, and the burden of debt she left unpaid bore down her own saplings. The good she did was marred by the good she left undone. Every religious project which she carried into execution wanted completeness. She expected others to contribute much, and they expected her to contribute more. One or two grand opportunities of chapel-building occurred; but a characteristic irresolution paralyzed her hand till too late. She had abundant money, but never could make up her mind to dispense it. She would promise to give, but delay the gift. She knew everything but the right moment, and no Christian enjoyed opportunity so often, and so often failed to use it.

She invaded my father's time as much as ever while she

resided near him. He was still consulted about chapels in aerial perspective, and pestered about the one in red brick. He thought himself free and fortunate only when the lady changed her name and residence, and a troublous sea rolled between them. Even then, however, she could write, annually cross the sea, and return to the assault. He was now increasingly popular, and her attentions became increasingly pressing. He had his great London charge, and was nearly bewildered by the multitude of affairs on his hands. Still there was the unfortunate chapel at B., and the exacting lady from D.

It was curious how her life seemed predestined to run out by the side of his. Though sea and land for some years divided them, still the lady knew that her best friend was her sternest monitor, and during some portion of nearly every later year of his life she was hovering about his path. Finally, too, when he came back to reside in London, she came back to reside in Kensington.

There, as old age stole upon her, saving habits became unalterable; her parsimony being alike ludicrous and lamentable. The essential economy of her earlier days had become habitual, and inveterate, and despicable. Yet, while the purse-strings were drawn close, there were secret holes at the other end. Her three houses were three drainages, and her two horses were rather burdens themselves than drawers of burdens. Her wretchedness in the midst of plenty, and her petty murmurs in the face of abundant mercies, made her character a study, and her presence a plague.

One Sabbath day she dined at my father's table; and though she was enfeebled and unwell, after dinner introduced her intended chapel in the air, and the deserted one on the earth. Thereupon my father—now himself enfeebled, and in anticipation of approaching death—again most plainly warned his guest. At length he became highly animated in his exhortations, and bold in his language. He declared that it was his last warning, and that it should be unrestrained. When the

lady hinted that if he survived her he would not be poorer, he indignantly (and, good man, unnecessarily) disclaimed any benefit. His eye kindled as he asserted that he would not touch her money if she left him all; he would never step into her carriage if she bequeathed it to him. He exposed all her subterfuges; he laid bare her self-delusions; he blew away with a breath her chapels in the air, and only wished he could do the same with the one on the ground. He presaged her unhappy end. He exclaimed with an emotion which troubled me on his account, rather than the lady's:—"I see it plainly before you, and I warn you in the sight of God; I warn you for your eternal interests; I warn you as your oldest, your only real friend in the world; I solemnly warn you that you are in peril of dying a miserable miser!"

A few months afterwards a casual call at her residence made me acquainted with the fact that this lady was dangerously ill, and that she would not allow a physician to be sent for, as her servant alleged, on account of the expense. At once I sent for our physician, and he informed me that the case was hopeless. My enfeebled father was driven to the house, assisted up the stairs, and admitted into the sick chamber. The rich lady was tossing in great uneasiness from side to side. Catching a glimpse of him, she stretched out her withered hands, as if imploringly. At once he knelt down at her bedside and engaged in prayer. On rising he exclaimed solemnly—"Have you settled your affairs? Tell me the truth." "Not to-day," said she, "but to-morrow." "To-day," said he, "or not at all." "To-morrow," rejoined she. "Too late," added he, "you are a dying woman." "No," groaned she, "to-morrow." On the morrow she died, and died intestate! The fingers so seldom relaxed in old age had naturally stiffened at the hour of death. With characteristic procrastination she had deferred her duty. She lived a life of excellent purposes, few of which she executed; she enjoyed unusual opportunities, most of which she missed.

Her large property went, as I have heard, to a very remote relative in a very distant country, a person, indeed, who had scarcely known of her relative's existence before she was officially informed of her death. That was a melancholy day on which I attended her interment. First, I entered a fireless room in a well-furnished house, while snow lay upon the ground, and a biting blast whistled without. Trustees and others attended out of compliment. To a neighbouring cemetery we at length slowly and shiveringly repaired. We shivered in the icy chapel; shivered still more in the stony vault; shivered on our return, and shivered again in the cheerless house. No one could express other feelings than those of surprise and regret. Some, evinced a sorrow, not unnatural, but it related to themselves, and was not complimentary to the deceased.

It was indeed a day and a scene not to be forgotten. Hopes lingering in the minds of some for years were now utterly defeated. Down to the servant, disappointment was general; nay, even lower still, down to a once petted but now unhappy dog, who had hitherto fared sumptuously every day—better, perhaps, than many a poor minister. He seemed keenly sensible of his utter destitution, and looked up wistfully in our faces as one by one we left the house. Weeks afterwards he was still wistfully looking out of the window—a signal instance of the vanity of canine as well as human expectations.

Having for so many years known the deceased, and having so faithfully and so recently warned her, my father was much affected by the mournful circumstances of her departure and burial. (What a contrast was her interment to his!) So soon as I had narrated to him the events of the day, he exclaimed with deep feeling, "Thank God, *we* have not got her money! For the whole world, I would not hear it said that I had flattered her for her wealth. It brought no blessing to her, and it would have brought no blessing to us. Thank God I was faithful to her! I never spared her." He afterwards referred to the same

individual, and his fidelity to her, when he thought himself on his death-bed. The course of events has here been anticipated in order to complete this narrative, and dismiss the unwelcome, but not uninteresting subject.

After this history of missed or misused opportunities, and a melancholy end, one or two sketches of smaller dimensions and varied interest may close the gallery of private portraiture in this locality. They shall be given in the minister's own words. The first displays a strong contrast to the preceding character:—

“I have missed more than one legacy for want of obsequiousness. But a curious case occurred in connexion with a chapel at Reading, Berkshire, where I occasionally officiated for a few weeks successively. One of the attendants was a lady greatly afflicted with cancer. The ministers who supplied were called to visit her, and she remunerated them handsomely. I could not bear the thought of being *paid* for such a service, and therefore declined to go. I felt that to refuse the fee if offered would be a tacit reflection upon my brethren. The lady misinterpreted my absence, and ascribed it to my nicety, and the delicacy of my nerves respecting such a sick chamber. To clear myself from this misconception, I disclosed my real reason to a friend with a strict charge to keep it secret; but it appears that the lady became acquainted with it, and without even mentioning it, appended a codicil to her will in which she bequeathed me £100, and, I think, to me only out of all the other ministers.”

This was, as far as I can learn, the only legacy my father ever received. He never sought one, and the only one he obtained came unsought. Had any legacy been bequeathed to him, even if unsought, I believe he would have declined it, had relatives been wronged, or the just expectation of others defeated.

Another singular incident, and in connexion with usefulness to ladies, is thus given:—

“While supplying at Orange-street Chapel, where my ministry

was made useful, I one day received an anonymous letter enclosing a one-pound note, and soliciting relief to the doubts of the writer respecting receiving the Lord's Supper at that place on the ground of a passage in the eleventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. I wrote in reply (objecting, however, to the fee of the one-pound note) an exposition of that passage, which deprived it of its fearful aspect to timid believers. I posted it, as directed, for 'E. M., Post-office, Gerrard-street, to be called for.' The writer was surprised that the answer never came.

"Some time afterwards she saw a friend, once in the same state of mind as herself, but now staying to partake of the ordinance. She sought to know how her friend had got rid of her doubts. 'In a strange way,' replied the friend; 'a letter with my initials came to me from the Post-office. It was written by Mr. Leifchild to some other person, but it scattered my fears to the winds, and here it is,' (producing it.) 'O,' said the inquirer, claiming it, 'that letter was for me.' Thus both ladies were benefited by the same letter.

"The first lady was afterwards discovered to be a Mrs. G., of Piccadilly. On becoming a member of my church at Kensington, she acquainted me with this fact and showed me my letter. It had been handed to different persons, and had benefited several in like manner. By constant usage it had become so injured that it would scarcely hold together."

A narrative respecting another lady, refers to a very perplexing case of conscience—

"I had a difficult case of conscience proposed to me while residing at Kensington. A lady had been staying at this place for a while, and had become one of my hearers. On her removal she wrote to me anonymously, requesting an interview, and enclosing a five-pound note for the relief of the poor. When she came to see me she remained veiled while she stated her case, which was this:—Many years before, she had married a man who proved to

be vile and worthless, and was at last outlawed. Out of her private fortune she remitted to him a certain allowance, which was sent by a captain who was acquainted with his retreat in America. At length this captain informed her he had learned that her husband had deceased, though he could not obtain particulars. He returned to her the last sum of money, and she made every inquiry to satisfy herself that her husband was no more.

“She afterwards married a pious gentleman who had become attached to her, and to him she had related the above facts. She lived with him very happily until, after some time, news arrived that her former husband was still living. Then arose the painful doubt whether, with such knowledge, she could rightfully remain with her present husband. He entreated her not to leave him, since the former husband would never claim her, and she might still befriend him. But she was in great perplexity, and sought from me relief in that perplexity. I hesitated to give an opinion till I had consulted other and older ministers, as Dr. Waugh, Dr. Nicolls of Swallow-street, Mr. Smith of Camberwell, and a few more with whom I was acquainted. I found a difference of opinion as to the course which should be advised, but the conclusion I came to was that she was justified, in the sight of God, in staying with her present husband. She was thus delivered from her perplexity, and would have made me a handsome present, but I rejected it.

“While I was at Kensington,” continues my father, “I visited, at the request of her friends, a lady of the name of C. She had heard me, and been struck with a remark I had made in disproof of the meaning commonly attached to the word ‘hell,’ in that part of the Apostle’s Creed where it is said ‘He descended into hell.’ She was now confined to her bed, and wished to see me. Upon my arrival, her sisters, who were genteel Church-going ladies, had an interview with me, and begged me to be gentle and comforting to the invalid. When, therefore, I was

introduced to her, I spoke softly and kindly. She, however, was anxious and inquisitive, and put several questions to me respecting what might be her future state. I answered hypothetically, and to the effect, that *if* she were the subject of a gracious change, she would enter heaven; but that if she were totally destitute of such a change, she must surely know the alternative. ‘And what is that?’ demanded the invalid—I could only reply ‘Hell.’

“No sooner had I spoken that word than she uttered a piercing scream, and exclaimed, ‘Did you say hell? O cruel man, hell! Take him away. O hell, hell!’ Her sisters now came in, and were indignant with me. I would make no apology, nor would they listen to any kind of explanation. I afterwards heard that the lady was removed and soon died.”

A quite opposite influence was exerted by Mr. Leifchild on other ladies, as is apparent in his own brief statement.

“Mrs. Hanson, daughter of Mr. Hoby, the bootmaker in the Haymarket, attended my ministry at Kensington, in company with her husband. She was an interesting and pious lady, but died at an early period of life. On her death-bed she solemnly charged me to have a concern for her young daughters, and I therefore paid them particular attention.

“They were both converted under my ministry, and joined our church. The younger one—Mary, devoted herself zealously to the missionary cause, and ultimately went out as a female teacher to Africa. There she laboured very assiduously and successfully until the Caffre war compelled her to return to England. Here, however, she could find no rest for her spirit, and eagerly desired renewed missionary labour. It happened most opportunely that a missionary to China, Mr. Wylie, visited me while Mary Hanson was sojourning at my house. I introduced him to her, and the issue was that she consented to become Mrs. Wylie, and followed that gentleman to China, where he proceeded as translator and teacher. In China, she was very

serviceable to her husband, but unhappily died prematurely, yet full of faith and hope."

One of the very few lengthy letters he wrote was penned at Kensington, and addressed to an esteemed young female friend. It may be appropriately introduced in this connexion.

"November 8th, 1815.

"MY DEAR HARRIET, — In compliance with your request, so affectionately and earnestly presented, I sit down to write a few lines which may hail you on the day that closes twenty-one years of your mortal existence. I can well enter into your feelings on this day. You have been looking seriously back on that part of the journey of human life which you have taken, and have been reminded by it of several important truths. It has satisfied you of the affecting fact that you are a sinner against God, and need that salvation which Christ alone can bestow. How many transgressions have twenty-one years collected against you! Surely the question accosts you to-day with peculiar force, and O let it have an answer—'Dost *thou* believe in the Son of God?' This review impresses you also with the emptiness and unsatisfactoriness of worldly enjoyments. Like a distant prospect, enamelled over and gilded by the sun, does this world appear to us in early life. But who has not found inequalities and blemishes on coming up to it? If hitherto we have not succeeded in our search after happiness from the world, surely the expectation of it ought now to be abandoned. There is something, I know not what, in the energy and buoyancy of youth, that decks everything around us with imaginary charms. We gaze and see all above in sunshine, and all beneath in flowers. But when youth is over a glory has left the earth, never to return. After this period, to seek our happiness from the world would be doubly criminal. O listen to that voice which now addresses you, saying—'Give *me* thy heart,' and 'the fashion of this world passeth away, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.'" Your survey of the past has further affected you with the rapidity and brevity of human life. How quickly have these one-and-twenty years fled away! You have passed through them like an arrow through the air. In the prospect they appeared long; in the retrospect they are *nothing*. From the spot where you now stand you can almost grasp the days of infancy and childhood. Thus quickly will all your days pass away—thus soon will come the period when the whole of life will

be in review, and not a day remain to come. Husband, then, these precious moments.

“Throw hours, throw years away—but moments prize.”

“I need not remind you of the mercies you have enjoyed. I am persuaded that on such a day as this you will not forget them. And, O my dear friend, what a comfort it is to reflect that He who has been our preserver so long, will continue to be our preserver if we serve Him; and our benefactor, not only for the whole of this short, frail and feverish life, but for the whole state of our being which prolongs itself in another world beyond the reach of thought.

“The future is all unknown. What a mercy it is for you that I cannot lift up the curtains and show it to you! Could I show you joy in reserve, it would make you repine at the delay. Could I show you affliction, it would embitter your present comforts. But you may safely put the rudder of your life into the hands of the Almighty, and beg Him to turn it which way soever He pleases.

“Begin soon to *live* in earnest. Have some definite object in view. Permit me to recommend the following, as leading principles of your future conduct. Store your mind continually, and in order, with all kinds of useful knowledge. Do good to those about you who are in distress. Cultivate intercourse with God in the exercises of prayer, meditation, and reading the Scriptures. This is a practice which I should be happy if you would adopt from this day. I can assure you of incalculable benefit from it. Commit to memory one passage of Scripture every morning, and ruminate upon it at all the leisure moments of the day.

“I hope, my dear friend, there are many happy days in store for you; that some one will be found capable of appreciating your excellence, and that you may live to be the smiling mother of a sweet family. Remember me to your dear father and mother, and to your sisters. Let no one see this scrawl. I charge you, be much in prayer every day. Be assured we shall remember you on our knees. May a thousand of the best blessings be showered down upon you this day, and upon every following day of your future life!

“Yours affectionately,

“J. LEIFCHILD.”

Twenty-five years later he wrote another letter to another young lady; and it may be suitable to bring the two letters

together, especially as little more remains of such epistolary admonitions.

TO A YOUNG FRIEND ON HER BIRTHDAY.

“RUSSELL PLACE, *December 26th*, 1840.

“MY DEAR MARY,—I have not time to write you a birthday note ; but I cannot refuse the expression of a wish, followed as it will be by prayer in my best moments, for your continued health, soundness of mind, and strength of religious principle. You will have been reminded, ere this reaches you, of the extent of your obligation to that care which commenced with your existence, and stamped a new proof of its presence on every unfolding page of your life. A good man, in tracing the proofs of divine kindness and care, will not confine his view to the converted period of his life, but extend it to the preservations of childhood—remarkable escapes from danger ; recovery from threatening malady ; and, above all, preservation from extreme lengths of sin and depravity. He will recognise an invisible hand snatching him from the brink of the precipice to which he was hastening, or encompassing him with a shield which warded off the darts of destruction. ‘Preserved,’ says the apostle, ‘in Christ Jesus, and called.’ But it is for your conversion you will be most thankful—that period when the power of inveterate habits gave way to a benign and gracious influence, issuing in the rise of a new character within you, and effecting a metamorphosis as great as that of the leopard when losing his spots, or the Ethiopian when changing his skin.

‘Great God, I own the power divine
That changed a heart so hard as mine.’

“In the review of the last year you will find probably much cause for humiliation. And will not your groundless fears and misgivings of the care of Providence be a cause ? But gather up the materials of your murmurings and discontent, and transmute them into notes of praise. Resolve with me to be more in the work of praise. In every thing give thanks. Praise may be considered as the wings on which prayer ascends to heaven, and which, without them, moves heavily. Sing no melancholy ditties, and take no pleasure in pensive strains, which only feed melancholy by expressing it. God loveth a cheerful giver and a cheerful heart. May every chord of your being frequently vibrate in sounding praise to the Most High !

"We added thirty to the church; but death has thinned our ranks, yet enlarged those of the same company in another country. It will come, it will come, on the hand that writes this, and on the eye that traces it! May you have the same testimony to give to a minister that Mrs. — gave to me in her dying chamber! 'Since I have belonged to your church, you have bound me to my kind. I *have* lived for others, as well as for my own improvement; and this thought, while I look for all to the mercy of God, is a solace to me now beyond all others.' A woman, whom she had brought to God and introduced into the church, exclaimed in all the eloquence of grief, as she gazed upon her corpse, 'Dear lips! they called my wandering soul to God; dear hands! they took me to His house; dear heart! that poured its consolations into mine!' There was no getting her away. What honour is equal to this?"

* * * * *

"Adieu! Be pleased, and you will always please men. Be holy and happy, and you will please God.

"J. LEIFCHILD."

Under date 1824, Mr. Leifchild notes his engagements in Scotland, on behalf of the London Missionary Society, in these terms:—

"I much enjoyed a preaching tour in Scotland for the London Missionary Society. Mr. Jay (of Bath) had preceded me, and I joined him at Edinburgh. He had prepared a long account of the Society, and made urgent appeals for funds at the end of his discourse. He had the mortification to find that the collection had been made at the door when the people entered the building, this usual preliminary collection alone being appropriated for the Missionary Society. I, on the other hand, prevailed on the officials in several places to have the plates held at the doors at the close of the service, and thus got a good collection. Mr. Jay's antithetic style of preaching did not suit the Scotch, and I believe he was not gratified with the visit.

"I preached in the kirk at Kirkaldy, where Mr. Irving's father-in-law, the Rev. Mr. Martin, was minister. The service was held in the afternoon; and I was requested to bow, at the

close, to the magistrates in the gallery. This, however, I purposely omitted to do; for I thought it derogatory to my profession as a minister of the Gospel.

"I preached at St. Paul's Chapel in Perth, and attended several public meetings at Stirling, St. Andrew's, and Inverness. I found the Scotch to be correct, outwardly religious, and hospitable as well as intelligent, while the scenery of their country filled me with delight."

In the above brief notes none of the numerous anecdotes appear which the English minister gathered up in this Scotch tour, and with which he was accustomed to entertain us repeatedly. On one occasion he was perplexed as to the order of the service, and his own part in it, when, upon interrogating the only attendant in the vestry, he was informed that he must "just do as their ain minister did."

"But how does *he* proceed?" was the inquiry.

"Just as he has always done," was the reply.

"Explain to me," again urged the anxious Englishman, "what is the first thing your minister does when he enters the pulpit."

"He just sits down," was the reply.

"What next does he do?"

"Well, he just craves a blessing to himself."

"What next?" inquired my father, who thought he *must* now have the desired information.

"Well, he just begins the service."

"How? how?" again urged the Englishman, to which the only reply was—

"The little bell has done ringing." And now my father must needs enter the pulpit, uninformed as to the order of procedure.

As we are now approaching the termination of his ministry at Kensington, a striking incident in connexion with it may be given in the minister's words:—

"One Sabbath morning a singular lapse of memory befel me,

which I had never before and have never since experienced. When I rose from sleep, I could not recollect any portion of the discourse which I had prepared on the day before; and what was most strange, I could not even remember the text of the prepared sermon. I was perplexed, and walked out before breakfast in Kensington Gardens. While there a particular text occurred to my mind; and my thoughts seemed to dwell upon it so much, that I resolved to preach from that, without further attempting to recall what I had prepared—a thing which I had never ventured to do during all my ministry.

“From this text I preached, and it was, ‘Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.’ I preached with great liberty, and in the course of the sermon I quoted the lines—

‘Beware of desperate steps! the darkest day—
Live till to-morrow—will have passed away.’

“I afterwards learned that a man in despair had that very morning gone to the Serpentine to drown himself in it. For this purpose he had filled his pocket with stones, hoping to sink at once. Some passengers, however, disturbed him while on the brink, and he returned to Kensington, intending to drown himself in the dusk of the evening. On passing my chapel he saw a number of people crowding into it, and thought he would join them, in order to pass away the time. His attention was riveted to the sermon, which seemed to be in part composed for him; and when he heard me quote the lines alluded to, he resolved to abandon his suicidal intention.”

After sixteen years of unremitting toil at Kensington, Mr. Leifchild might naturally have presumed that he should finally lay down his pastoral burden where he first took it up. There he had gathered a full and faithful congregation, had thrice enlarged his chapel, and had added many intelligent friends to his circle. There, too, he had made a name, round which respect, honour, and affection were wreathed. Moreover, domestic

associations conjoined their links to the local chain. He had opened the door of that house wherein he now resided to the wife of his heart, and within its walls he had welcomed his only son to the world. Almost every spot in that vicinity had become endeared to him by pleasing associations. He had meditatively paced lonely lanes, and had sermonized in Kensington Gardens and in Holland Park. Even Holland House had been opened to him when public objects emboldened him to enter, and many years afterwards Lord Holland kindly received his son in that quaint old mansion, in remembrance of his father's character.

In point of locality, then, he had few things to wish otherwise, excepting indeed one which was of the utmost consequence to his efficiency. Sanguine, vivacious, energetic as he was, he required a bracing atmosphere, while Kensington yielded just the reverse. There, as he often said, he never felt sufficient elasticity of mind. He did his work, and did it well, but always as *work*—as hard and burdensome work.

He rose early, walked into Kensington Gardens, made use of a cold bath, and took all the most promising means for invigorating his frame, but with little success. Life was always on a low level, like the locality in which it was passed. He sighed for hills, and would have rejoiced in the 'difficult air of the iced mountain.' On Mondays he felt as many clergymen do, and on Sundays as no clergymen should feel in body; yet his innate cheerfulness and his high view of the claims of his calling carried him through every duty and discouragement.

The initial cause of his removal to Bristol was in this wise, in my father's words:—

"Having preached at the Tabernacle at Bristol, I formed an acquaintance with Mr. Lowell, then the minister at Bridge-street Chapel. He was a frank, hearty, and gentlemanly man, and when I afterwards met him occasionally in London we passed some agreeable hours together. I subsequently preached the missionary sermon at his place in Bristol, and made, I think, a

favourable impression. At his decease I was requested to be one of the supplies of the bereaved congregation for two or three Sabbaths. I complied with this request, and an unusual feeling of attachment sprang up towards myself. The place became crowded, and on my return I received a very cordial invitation to the pastorate."

How should he reply to this unexpected invitation?

Not hastily, but only after prayer, and deliberate consideration with his friends. He notes three particular reasons for inclining to accept it. First, the relaxing air of Kensington; then the fear he had of not being able to find new texts and new matter for the pulpit; and next—I should have said first and foremost—the "call" appeared to be entirely providential. He had neither sought it nor dreamt of it. No fellow-minister had recommended him—no introduction had been asked or given. No single person pleaded for him at Bristol, or against him at Kensington.

Amongst his valued brethren in the ministry he thought Mr. Jay of Bath peculiarly qualified to advise him on the question of removal, and after writing to him received the following reply:—

"BATH, July 24th.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You will think me negligent in suffering several days to elapse before replying to your friendly letter. I could, I think, make out a tolerable apology by detailing a number of circumstances, but I have neither room nor time. This is *Saturday*, and though there is no post to-day, I must write for to-morrow.

"And now what shall I say? You have really so balanced things in your statement that if I could throw weight enough into either scale to make it preponderate, I should feel it a difficulty in determining what it should be. If I consulted my inclinations and wishes Bristol would have it immediately, for I should very much like to have you for a neighbour as well as a friend. But it is a very important step, and I pray that the Lord may make your path plain before you, and that integrity and uprightness may preserve you while you wait on Him. It is a most important sphere; and I know no man so adapted to it as yourself. Then the people have

much commended themselves of late by their conduct towards each other and towards their late minister.

"Your present station, too, is a very useful one, both in itself and by its nearness to London, and London wants men of talent, and men who can appear to advantage at public meetings. But surely the demand for new matter in your pulpit exercises ought to be as great in Bristol as at Kensington! I hope, if you go there, you will deliver up *all* your old sermons to the keeping of your wife, and let her now and then suffer you to put your hand into your old store, when you have been too poorly or too engrossed for study. The neglect of fresh and vigorous preparation for the pulpit is the bane of preaching with many. I wish ministers would never acquire the *knack* of preaching, or feel that facility in their work which keeps them, comparatively at least, from retirement and study. It is only by being much alone with God, and by *re-studying everything*, that the mind is imbued with it afresh, that the unction and acceptableness and usefulness of our labours can be renewed. Your health is quite another thing, and this should have weight in your determination.

"This scrawl, perhaps, will add to your difficulty rather than diminish it; but it is a case in which you must decide for yourself. You cannot place another person in your own condition, so as to see what you see, and to feel what you feel. I have written, however, with good art (though undesigned) with regard to both the congregations. Neither of them, were they to see my letter, would think me their enemy. Yet, perhaps, neither of them would think me sufficiently their friend. Well, I must bear it. Best love to Mrs. Leifchild, in which Mrs. Jay joins.

"Ever, my dear Sir, yours cordially,

"WM. JAY."

My father notifies that on afterwards pressing Mr. Jay in the course of conversation about his old sermons, he admitted that he did not himself strictly follow the advice he had tendered.

The conclusion ultimately arrived at was that Bristol should overrule Kensington, and as the minister found the state of his health to be one urgent motive for removal, so he afterwards observes on this point:—

"My conviction now is that if I had remained there (Kensington), my days would have been much shortened. But I

deliberated long, prayed earnestly, took advice, and much to the astonishment of great numbers, I resolved on compliance with the invitation to Bridge-street Chapel, Bristol."

The invitation to Bristol had been unanimous (one dissident being scarcely noticeable) and particularly urgent, inasmuch as it was threefold. The three letters of invitation and the two letters in reply are here presented together, and are mutually illustrative.

"At a Meeting of the Church and Congregation held this evening, July 28th, 1824, the following letter to the Rev. John Leifchild was signed :—

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—We, the undersigned, being members of the church and congregation assembling in the Independent Chapel in Bridge-street, Bristol, in pursuance of a unanimous resolution of a meeting of the church assembled on the first instant, and of a resolution of the church and congregation assembled on the sixth instant, with only one dissident, do hereby affectionately request that you will take upon you the pastoral care and oversight of us in the Lord, assuring you of our humble hope that we shall be found in the exercise of prayer for the success of your ministry, and for the enlargement of the church of Christ, through your valuable means.

"We beg to subscribe ourselves,

"Rev. and dear Sir,

"Your affectionate and devoted friends and servants,

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| "HENRY BROWN, | } <i>Deacons.</i> " |
| "RICHARD ASH, | |
| "SAMUEL NEWELL, | |

The next letter was addressed by a young lady, and the one following it by a young gentleman, on behalf of the juveniles:—

"BRISTOL, 8th July, 1824.

"DEAR SIR,—Sensibly impressed from the experience of your services at Bridge-street Chapel with the peculiar advantages resulting from your ministry, and feeling the great importance of Christian communication and counsel, and the excellent fruits arising from a faithful pastor and shepherd of Jesus Christ to the lambs of the flock; we the undersigned, constituting the juvenile

part of the females of the congregation, do affectionately submit our request, that you will take upon yourself the office of our pastor, adding our fervent prayers that the Great Head of the Church will so direct you in His wisdom as to enable you to determine, so as to meet His concurrence and the approval of your own conscience,

"We beg, dear Sir, to subscribe ourselves,

"Most affectionately your devoted friends."

(Signed by ELLEN STEPHENS and forty-five others.)

"BRISTOL, July 8th, 1824.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—We, the undersigned, being young persons belonging to the congregation who assemble for divine worship in Bridge-street Chapel, beg leave respectfully to address you on a subject in which we feel great interest.

"The church and congregation having unanimously resolved to invite you to accept the office of pastor, we think it right to inform you that it was with the highest degree of pleasure and satisfaction we heard of the probability of your becoming our future minister; having attentively listened to the glad tidings you so faithfully delivered during your recent stay amongst us, and being much edified by the affectionate and fervent manner in which you explained the sacred truths of the Gospel—especially with the peculiar interest you so evidently manifested toward those who are just entering upon the busy scenes of life. We know (as you reminded us) that the young must compose the future church. Our friends and relatives are fast hastening to eternity, and we are surrounded by a thousand temptations, and as sheep without a shepherd.

"It is with these views, Sir, that we venture thus respectfully to request you to concur with the desires of those who are further advanced in life, and thereby accord with our united wishes; and, we hope and trust, through the divine blessing, that you will be instrumental in increasing the number of the church of Christ below, who shall at last compose part of the church triumphant in heaven. We need not tell you that we greatly love and respect you, and hoping that you will not deem us to be intrusive in thus addressing you,

"We beg to subscribe ourselves, rev. and dear Sir,

"Yours very respectfully."

(Signed by CÆSAR SHORT and several others.)

"Rev. J. Leifchild, Kensington."

REPLY TO THE INVITATION OF THE CHURCH.

"KENSINGTON, *August 13th, 1824.*

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,—In replying to your kind, affectionate, and unanimous call to be your pastor, I am necessarily the subject of a variety of emotions. Nearly seventeen years I have laboured among the people of my first choice with the greatest satisfaction, and some little success. I have seen the congregation growing up around me, and the church multiplying from thirty individuals—nearly all of whom have now fallen asleep—to one hundred and sixty-three, the present number of communicants, most of them the fruits of my own ministry. I have watched over their spiritual interests in some measure as one who has to give an account of them at a solemn tribunal; and I have received from them, especially from the young among them of both sexes, repeated and demonstrative proofs of their love and esteem. While not wholly inattentive to the calls of duty abroad, I have always felt my home to be among them, and have considered myself to be only the minister of others, but their pastor. From such a people, it is no slight consideration that should induce a thought of parting, or that would admit of a separation unembittered with the severest pangs. The increasing demand upon me for public services, in a situation so near the metropolis, and the apparent inroads in consequence made upon my health, led me some time back to think that a change of situation to a more open country, and where my energies might be more concentrated, would be desirable. But I considered myself too much under the divine disposal to think of any place for that purpose, or to take one step of my own accord towards such an alteration. In this state of mind I received an invitation from an esteemed friend, one of your number, to pay you a short visit, simply as a token of friendship for a church whose pastor had honoured me with his esteem, and whose death had made a deep impression on my heart, particularly as our last conversation together had been peculiarly spiritual and interesting. To this invitation, couched as it was in the most friendly and delicate terms, I felt that I could not refuse to accede. I was struck with astonishment on this visit at the attention produced, and the disposition so generally manifested by the people to look to me as the successor of my late revered and beloved friend. This circumstance led me to accept of an invitation to pay a second visit, when my former impressions were renewed and confirmed. I must have

been made of other materials than those of which I am constituted, not to have been affected with the numerous proofs of your regard, especially of those members of the church and congregation to whom, for want of time, not of inclination, I had not been even introduced till the evening of the last public service. Fearful, however, of being misled by my feelings, I have laid my whole case before several of the most experienced and judicious ministers in the country, who have all, with one exception, decided in favour of my removal. The probable opportunity for more extensive usefulness at Bristol has been the turning-point with them all. I conclude, therefore, that I am obeying the voice of Providence in complying with your wishes, and I hereby signify my acceptance of your call.

“I shall now call my own people together, and make them acquainted with the reasons which have influenced me to this step, and the principles by which I am actuated. I have nothing to conceal—nothing (with thankfulness to the Divine Being I write it) that shuns investigation. I make no question but that if I continue faithful to you, God will give me your affections, and enable you to co-operate with me, and hold up my hands, in every proper measure for advancing the interests of piety among you, and by you throughout the city, the country, and the world. To that interesting class, the young of both sexes, that assembled round me when I was last with you, and that seemed to me to be standing on the borders of the church, waiting for some hand to draw them still forward, and at length to enclose them within its sacred pale, I look with indescribable solicitude; while to the more advanced, and particularly the tried and afflicted children of God among you, I trust I shall not be inattentive, or wanting in those endeavours to solace and to improve their character, for which the pastoral office was eminently instituted. And now, let me implore your prayers. Think of me as one who, impelled by a sense of duty, quits a dear and beloved home, the scene of thousands of tender and grateful recollections, to cast myself upon your sympathies, in the hope of finding among you a spiritual kindred and brotherhood like that he leaves behind. Think of my dear church and congregation, and beg of God with me that He will not let them wander as sheep without a shepherd, but that He may send them one who shall be as willing as I have been to employ his best strength for their welfare, who shall evince none of my infirmities, who shall surpass me in every gift and grace of the Holy Spirit, and raise a far happier and nobler superstructure

upon the foundation I have laid than I have been hitherto able to erect.

"I am yours,

"To serve and to love in the Gospel of Christ,

"J. LEIFCHILD."

*"To the Members of the Independent Church and
Congregation assembling at Bridge-street,
Bristol, with the Officers and Deacons."*

REPLY TO THE INVITATION OF THE YOUNG.

"KENSINGTON, Aug. 23, 1824.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Do me the favour, at your convenience, and according to your own discretion, of communicating the following sentiments to those friends whose names, if I conjecture right, follow your own, in a letter directed to me from Bristol, on the 8th of last month.

"Assure them that the appendage of their names to such a document was a sight most gratifying to me. Accustomed as I am to abhor dissimulation in others, I should severely condemn myself did I feign an attachment to youth of both sexes which I did not feel. Naturally I am fond, as I believe most persons are, of what is young and full of promise; but in a religious point of view, this fondness turns to anxiety and deep solicitude. When I see young persons connecting themselves, or connected by their friends and parents, with the means of grace, I think of the parental anxieties awakened by their appearance in such a situation—of the joy with which a minister's heart must bound on introducing them as approved members into the church—and of the long years of usefulness that may be supposed to follow such a step. On the other hand, I think of the temptations through which they must break, and the fascinations they must overcome, in order to pledge themselves to the service of God in the Gospel; I think of their liability to substitute impression for principle, and to rest in the form of godliness short of the power; I think of the danger, should they avoid this, of their being drawn aside afterwards by the tempting baits of worldly honour, wealth, or pleasure, so as to lose all their bloom, and falsify all the hopes which their early excellence had raised. I think of these things, and my heart throbs and palpitates with an uneasiness about them, hard to be imagined, certainly not to be described. In warmer climates, and in pastoral times, he would not have been thought worthy the name of a shep-

herd who, on beholding a number of wanderers returning to the fold, and making their way through difficulties and hindrances, was not seized with the tenderest solicitude in reference to the *lambs*; and hardly is he worthy the name of a Christian pastor, who is not similarly affected to the lost sheep of the human race. These young persons then will judge if, with such emotions, I can ever be indifferent to their interests, or undelighted with the proofs of their attention and affection. I have cords of this nature to break at the place I leave, or at least most painfully to lengthen; but I hope that others will be raised up in my place for those whom I love, and whose names, though I am absent from them, will never be effaced from my heart. It will be my care to guard the young against the common religious delusions of the day, among which none is more fatal, because of its congeniality to the human heart, than that of supposing that correct notions, uprightness of conduct, and amiability of manners will be sufficient for happiness, without that renovation of nature which is to be effected through faith in Christ and the energies of the Holy Ghost. To this *underground work* I shall bend my attention and endeavours, satisfied that unless the living principles of grace and holiness are introduced into the heart, all exterior graces that adorn the character must be destitute of solid worth, and fail to survive the ruins of the grave.

"I check my hand, hoping that many opportunities will be afforded me of uttering my wishes, and of enforcing truth on behalf of yourself and the young friends with whom you are associated.

"Yours affectionately,

"Miss Stephens."

"J. LEIFCHILD."

For nearly six months did the pastor remain at Kensington endeavouring to arrange all things for a sure continuance, and it was on Sunday, December 5th, 1824, that he preached an elaborate farewell sermon, afterwards printed, and entitled "Christian Doctrines and Duties; or, the Minister's Preaching, and the People's Practice." The text was Colossians ii. 6, 7, and in the course of the sermon he gives a clear summary of the doctrines he had taught, and the correlative duties he had enjoined during his entire ministry at this chapel.

Towards the close he pathetically addresses his still unconverted hearers, and then concludes in the following terms:—

“ I turn, with a very different class of emotions, to those of you, my beloved hearers, to whom I may consider myself as having instrumentally given a spiritual and immortal life. From some I have received assurances to this effect, in moments that precluded all equivocation, and in a manner that left on my mind not a particle of doubt. The voices of their benedictions often accompany me, uttered as they were at a time when all the force of Christian affection was concentrated within them, and when their hearts not only seemed to dictate their words, but to flow along with them. O that you may continually cleave with purpose of heart unto the Lord ; and that, in the great and eventful day, you may be the crown of my joy and rejoicing. You have many teachers, but you can only have one spiritual father ; and to have begotten you again by the Gospel of Jesus is a ground of exultation to me which no language can describe. I would close my labours among you in the words which good Mr. Brown, of Haddington, addressed to his children on his dying bed, charging you, as he charged them, *to meet me at the right hand of the Judge.*

“ To my numerous friends and coadjutors in every work and labour of love, I most unwillingly pronounce the word farewell. We are about to occupy different scenes, but still to serve the same cause. As a family, I persuade myself that we shall not be forgotten in your prayers, nor will you ever cease to find a place in ours. To my family, as well as to myself, this spot presents too many objects of interest ever to be obliterated from our remembrance. As the scene of her first acquaintance with divine truth, and as the place where she has subsequently employed herself with assiduity and perseverance for the instruction of the young and the benefit of the poor, it will be recollected at a distance with fond regret by one whom I need not name. In him whom she has so faithfully assisted, the very mention of its name will ever awaken the tenderest feelings. Here many of his earliest ministerial days have been spent—here for a long

period he has enjoyed the respect and friendship of all classes around him—and here he has shed mingled tears of sorrow and congratulation over the graves of beloved friends, whose rejoicing spirits are now assembled around the throne of God. To Kensington, wherever he may dwell, his thoughts will often turn, fraught with grateful sentiments, and with every wish on your behalf which pious friendship is wont to inspire.”

It was a damp and miserable morning when we left Kensington to proceed to our distant destination. The Bristol coach passed the bottom of the street at a very early hour. Just before that hour arrived, the door of our humble but commodious house closed upon us for ever. Down the long street we three silently and sorrowfully walked. Local attachments were strong in my mother, and she was weeping. On those flag-stones her little son had played but a day or two before, and a child's regrets did not quicken his mother's departure. The minister glanced regretfully at the chapel as he passed it, but soon the coach-wheels rumbled on the road, and the vehicle paused for us at the end of Hornton-street. There, also, others were pausing, besides the passengers in the coach. Early as was the hour, a few faithful friends had assembled to weep their last tears at the departure of their long-loved friends. The minister saw some of his devoted converts growing distinct out of the damp mist, and a group of humble individuals had turned aside for a moment to weep ere they went to work. Some were losing a father in Christ, some a supporter in trial and poverty, and all a friend. I was assisted last into the coach, and then down rained our tears, on dashed the horses, and away went that little family whose name is not yet forgotten in the old town of Kensington.

CHAPTER IV.

The Bristol Period.

(FROM 1824 TO 1830.)

SECTION I.

IT was a noteworthy old chapel in which Mr. Leifchild began his new pastorate. Situated in a leading business-street, where ground was very valuable, no space could be left unappropriated; and as the chapel had to be elevated, in order to permit of entrance from a higher level on its opposite side, the room underneath was let out to the best bidder, who happened to be a wine and spirit merchant. Hence Theodore Hook's wicked lines were precisely applicable to it—

“There's a spirit above and a spirit below,
A spirit of joy and a spirit of woe;
The spirit above is a spirit divine,
The spirit below is the spirit of wine.”

The chapel's exterior was ecclesiastical only in its windows. How to get into it from the leading street was by no means apparent, until some one should point out a little door on one side. Gaining this little door you found an easy entrance, and then mounted a flight of covered steps. At length you were rewarded by attaining another door, and that one opened into the chapel.

The real front of the chapel, speaking *Hibernicé*, was at the back; or rather, the large doors were back doors. They opened into a narrow lane, and to the cheerless prospect of an old church-yard. You passed the church door in order to reach that of the chapel, and a very small change of space sufficed for a considerable change of creed. It was awkward when the people who

came in by the large doors in the back lane met those who came in by the side door from the front street. There was then a confluence of in-flowing streams, and, on occasions of great crowding, the "meeting of the waters" was neither musical nor poetical.

Stout painted pillars rose sturdily to support the roof, and imparted an aspect of strength and steadiness to the sacred structure, which inspired great confidence. Behind those pillars sat equally steady supporters of the place, in the shape of highly respectable and long-trying gentlemen, with their families. Without the painted pillars the roof would have come down; without the living pillars the "cause" could not have been kept up. Each, too, seemed conscious of their relative importance to the chapel. You could not destroy the old pillars, neither could you dispense with the old people. Strangers might at first think them both a little heavy, but the old people, at least, were very hearty. At length you liked them both; and when you came to know how much they had borne, and how stable they had been, you would not have parted with old pillars or old people for anything that modern architecture or new fashions could offer you.

In a lower rank there was a personage of similar importance and antiquity, viz., the old pew-opener. A memorable man was he, wiry in body, spectacled and bewigged; in a sense not at all apostolic, "he used great plainness of speech," for by long service he had earned the freedom of his tongue. Though devoted to my father he was rather put out by his popularity. The previous minister had been soothing and quiet, and had made but slight demands, in any form, upon the old pew-opener. On my father's arrival, however, measures were changed as well as ministers, and the privileged official had now to run where he had lately walked, and what was equally painful, to be silent where he once talked. The new minister allowed no vestry criticisms, and reprimanded all vestry gossipers. After-chapel conversations being discouraged the pew-opener was unconsulted, his opinion was no longer of account, and his verdict upon family matters no longer delivered.

Enforced silence and increased speed he might have endured without a murmur, but his entire faculties were tasked to accommodate the increasing and thronging attendants at the chapel. "What do'e all come here for?" was his not unfrequent salutation to strangers who pressed upon him from behind or claimed his attention before. The inconvenience to himself was great, for now he could scarcely wend his perilous way to the old brazen chandelier, as it hung with its multiform branches from the centre of the ceiling, and with its numerous bristling candles awaited his enkindling touch by the elevation of a long taper-topped rod.

It was this old pew-opener's duty, on all occasions of periodical baptisms, to exercise a general fatherly superintendence over the waiting and wailing infants in the vestry of the chapel. Sometimes he stood *in loco parentis* for an absent father, and frequently he brought the babes out of the vestry in his long lean arms, while the fathers were waiting at the chapel door ready to receive their treasures and then to advance with them to the pulpit. On one such occasion he had gone back into the vestry, and while tarrying there, the minister, thinking the ordinance of baptism had terminated, was engaged in concluding the service; just as he was pronouncing the benediction the old pew-opener re-appeared in the aisle of the chapel with another babe in his arms. Unable to repress his vexation, and glancing angrily at the minister through his spectacles, he audibly murmured, "Here's another of them; why couldn't you wait a minute?"

Of the large old vestry I retain sundry recollections—of its stiff old forms, its green-baize table, its antique candlesticks, and its busy aspect on great collection days, especially on the occasion of the collections after the missionary sermons, when one hundred and fifty pounds or more would be the practical result of one Sunday's appeals.

In this solid and sombre sanctuary my father now began to labour with his constitutional ardour, and very soon a new life pervaded the old pews, and the whole society. The staid and

quiet few, who, while they loved the new minister, did not love commotion and a concourse, were still staid and quiet, as their new pastor never was. The chapel would accommodate, I think, about eight or nine hundred hearers, when closely packed; and it was no small thing, in the then state of Independency in Bristol, even to hope for the constant gathering together of such an addition. Certainly not a small congregation welcomed the new comer at first, and as certainly a much larger one soon grew around him. It was on the Sunday evenings that the building soon became full, and in the end was densely thronged. About six o'clock the adjoining passages, so noiseless at other times, showed signs of population; and at half-past six, the hour for commencing the evening service, old Mary-le-port Lane, to which the principal doors opened, was full of hasty comers. If my father were preaching on any special occasion, as to the young people, by announcement, it was not easy to walk quietly over the old stones, and less easy still to enter the old doors. When the time came, the preacher himself had a difficult course from his remote little vestry to his distant and capacious but barricaded pulpit. He must needs make one turning to the left, then another to the right, and lastly mount a number of steps before he could take his public seat and prepare for his duties. This passage was effected through narrow ways, where men, women, and children were compressed into uncomfortable closeness, and where the expectants of pews could scarcely make way for the expected one in the pulpit. Once there, however, the old pew-opener was at liberty to fill the pews and to empty the aisles. This was a time of bustling and hustling which elicited from him audible, though not complimentary observations.

The service was decorous and impressive, and according to the usual order of Congregationalists. All was attention and calmness, until my father, after perhaps a long and argumentative discourse, would reach its application and approach its conclusion. Then came forth the rushing sparks from the glowing fire; then

came the pith and the point, the touching expostulation and the solemn exhortation; then rose the pulpit-orator to his full height, and then the skilful archer sent his arrows fully home. The dark square chapel itself seemed to participate in the tremulous excitement, the old chandelier seemed to sway in the general movement, and the old people appeared to have a momentary return of youth and fervour. As to the young people, they were eager and rapt in their attention. Emotion communicated itself from one to another, and such good and gracious work was done when they were specially addressed, that they flocked round the preacher in increasing companies, and attributed to these sermons imperishable benefits.

The writer of these pages vividly recalls the whole scene as his pen attempts to describe it. A very young school-boy in those days, the Sunday nights at Bridge-street were anticipated with an eagerness beyond even my longing for a holiday. They were hours of holy excitement and seasons of indelible impressions, and there are still some in the vicinity who do not forget them. The Sabbath morning services were less exciting, less densely thronged, and perhaps less congenial to the emotional part of the preacher's temperament. Yet there were most pungent and powerful appeals often made in the morning sermons, and I imagine I now see the fixed attention to them not only of the young, but particularly of two elderly gentlemen who sat not far apart in the chapel.

Of these two aged hearers, one bald, and the other amply white-haired, the latter conceived that my father was continually preaching at him, and of this misconception, though founded entirely upon the pertinence of the preacher's application, it was impossible to disabuse his hearer. On many a Monday morning he would either write to, or call upon his minister and complain of the public exposure which he had endured on the previous day. He believed that one of his daughters, or one of his secret foes, had poured into my father's ear the tale

of his sins and shortcomings, and the failure of correspondence between his profession and his practice. In vain the preacher assured him that he never heard his name in private, and that he would scorn to employ the pulpit as a pillory. Monday mornings still brought the complaining letter or the complainant, until the poor minister became the really misused man. At length, one morning, my father finding all his reasonings powerless to convince his visitor, terminated a painful interview by addressing him :—" Mr. —, as I find you do not believe me, and that all I have asserted and re-asserted is met with incredulity, I have but one alternative—Sir, allow me to show you, for the first and last time, *my door*." The white-haired hypochondriac stood aghast, but he was not permitted to stand undecided. Out he went, home he went, and then from house to house of my father's hearers he went, loudly complaining that his minister had turned him out of his doors. " Quite right," rejoined one of the visited, " it is only what he ought to have done months ago."

The minister of Bridge-street Chapel was not only an effective and popular preacher, but likewise an active promoter of all that was benevolent and practically helpful to the poor and the needy. Societies were formed for these objects in connexion with the chapel, and a " Ladies' Auxiliary Missionary Society " met monthly, worked diligently, and was anxiously aided by the minister's wife—with what success may be estimated from the sum annually raised by it, namely, three hundred pounds. This was principally accumulated by small subscriptions.

Not only in such sanctuary auxiliaries did the minister labour incessantly, but also in almost every religious society in the city with which he was invited to co-operate. Not merely his own now large congregation, but also the entire body of Congregationalists felt that a new power had been infused into social engagements and Christian co-operation by the energetic pastor of the once-waning congregation. Everywhere Mr. Leifchild was invited and eagerly expected to address meetings, to stir up zeal, to pro-

mote united labours, and to enforce that crucial test of all such assemblages—the collection. It was impossible not to see that this man was in earnest for others, and in himself a warm-hearted worker, abounding in brotherly love, above all petty jealousies, and desirous of becoming a blessing to the city, as well as his chapel. Every congenial spirit was attracted to him, while uncongenial men were repelled and dissatisfied.

From one of the latter class he suffered considerable annoyance. The real cause was that this professed brother had lost not a few hearers who migrated from his chapel to my father's; and writhing as he secretly did under the loss, he privately maligned my father in respect of his veracity on one occasion of business. Almost any other man would have passed by with well-merited contempt this unfounded imputation. The whole affair was unworthy of one minute's thought, out of the many hours it engaged,—and would not have been here referred to but for two illustrations which it affords of my father's character—one, his jealous feeling, his over-sensitive anxiety for the untarnished honour of his name; and another, his unconquerable resolve to unearth any malignant mole, and to punish any secret traducer. Such a man he held in deep abhorrence—such a man, if he had an opportunity, he would pursue with an ardour like that of fox-hunters, and as utterly disproportioned to the worth of the creature hunted.

Another circumstance which justifies an allusion to so immaterial an occurrence is this:—it afforded my father another opportunity for affirming his belief in a special and retributive Providence even in this life. I shall have occasion to refer to this again, but it may be here mentioned that the good man's rooted conviction was, that all such persons as his unamiable backbiter, just alluded to, would certainly be punished either in themselves or their children, for such misdeeds as the one specified; and this belief he held most strongly in relation to all injuries inflicted upon God's righteous ministers. Of course,

therefore, while he endeavoured to forgive his base brother, as I believe he did, he prophesied in his own home that the said brother would be punished in this world, in himself or his household, though he himself might not hear of it. But the remarkable thing is that he *did* hear of it, and in a singular manner. Late in life a lady, who was in urgent need of money, applied to him by letter, and founded her claim to notice on the fact that she was the daughter of his old friend (!) at Bristol, naming the very minister who had been the base brother. My father showed me the letter with the air of a man who finds a long-maintained theory strikingly confirmed. "Here," said he, "is the fulfilment of my prophecy. Here is the daughter of my old enemy, in absolute distress. Who could have conceived this would happen, when I was at Bristol and he was in the height of his pride? I will send her a sovereign, not because she has any claim upon me, but because I wish to prove to my own mind that I have forgiven her father's malignity." And he did send the sovereign, without the slightest reference to the motive, or to circumstances of which probably the daughter had never heard.

If the old chapel in which my father preached at Bristol merits description, certainly the house in which he resided equally deserves a brief notice. He could not live in the city, and was medically commended to a high situation in the vicinity. An auctioneer was at that time advertising a "little paradise," and found a ready reader of his rhetoric in the new minister. Terms were in due time arranged, and we three, with our baggage and books, rode or scrambled up three or four streets of perilous steepness, then wound round to a narrow *cul-de-sac*, flanked by a dead wall, and finally entered Old Park House. Soon afterwards a bright brass plate announced to the curious neighbours that the Rev. J. Leifchild had taken up his abode in their midst, and now the auctioneer's "little paradise" possessed an Adam and Eve.

It was an oddly laid-out house, even more strangely and quaintly

disposed than the old chapel in the city below. When you entered, you descended instead of ascending; you saw a kitchen before you instead of a parlour, and a greenhouse in place of a passage. The parlours, when discovered, were found to be of odd shape and old date, with carved wooden mantel-pieces, from which festoons hung gracefully, while on one side a large cupboard bespoke a welcome capacity for pleasant things. All our goods were got into the rooms and into order in due time, and the work of the house went on in subordination to the work of the chapel.

The garden was almost as queerly shaped as the house. It was three-fold in division and intersected by a long flagged terrace. There were many things in it pleasant to the eye and more pleasant to the taste. Here my father again became a boy with his boy. Here he enjoyed many happy hours of relaxation. Here he sang hymns of six verses and tunes of doubtful melody. Here he concocted sermons and recited them. Here he walked and conversed with friends, and here—why should it not be added?—he played games, helped in the manufacture of kites, and aided in the display of fireworks. As to the latter, we had annual exhibitions of them which were my delight and my mother's dread. The young people of the congregation, and the ladies of a private school in particular, were privileged spectators of this really beautiful pyrotechny. No one of the whole company enjoyed their presence and their pleasure more than my father, and he himself let off many a squib, and terrified with many a cracker. How characteristic of the genial man were these occasions and these innocent pleasures! He who could rebuke sin as sternly, and expose guilt as authoritatively as any preacher of his day—he who could carry his hearers away with him into the confines of another world, and soar up to the glories of anticipated heaven—he who could tread the world beneath his feet and hold its temptations in defiance—this very man could also enter with ardour into the sports of boyhood, and for one happy hour become as young in heart as the youngest of us in age.

In his old age he revisited Bristol, as indeed he had done more than once after his departure. On the very last visit he preached to a vast congregation in the largest chapel, and there were not a few who smiled to see him again, and wept to hear him once more. The old doctrines were illustrated, the old echoes were startled, only some old friends were gone. The preacher himself regained for the hour his wonted fire, and applied all with his wonted force. It cost him much to preach thus; but when once in the pulpit he was like the old war-horse at the sound of the trumpet. Venerated for what he then was, beloved for what he had formerly done—welcomed in old houses where, alas! there was many a vacant seat—met with tears on the one hand and smiles on the other, his revisitation of Bristol was a ministerial triumph, a renewal of unbroken friendships, a reminiscence of unworldly satisfactions.

“Let us go,” said he to his son one morning, during this last visitation, “to the old house.” Thitherward accordingly we went. We passed along the same dingy streets, and up the same steep hills; we paused and looked over the dense city below us, and counted again the numerous old church-towers, and felt peculiar emotions as we wound round narrow corners and entered the old *cul-de-sac*. We referred to events of only personal history, yet of deep interest to us, and as we came up to the long dead wall our hearts were stirred within us. We resolved to knock at the door, send in our names, and explain our wishes. But, oh, sad disappointment! we could find no door to knock at. A neighbour informed us that the house had been pulled down. Back we went with grave countenances and slow steps. Yet so is it in the course of but a few years—the scenes of our old delights are destroyed—the very walls within which we laughed and wept, prayed and studied, lived and laboured, are overturned and removed!

Some long lanes, by which our old house was approached from the city of Bristol, were flanked by dead walls, on which at one

time sundry such sentences were scribbled in base chalk as the following:—"Who is going to kiss the Pope's toe? Parson Leifchild." "Wanted, a thousand gridirons for burning heretics; apply to Parson Leifchild." How these scurrilities came into the vulgar mind and employed the vulgar hand may be succinctly told.

At the time when the proposal for Catholic Emancipation agitated the whole political world, Bristol participated eagerly in the general excitement. Many Irish thronged the back streets of the old city, and the Catholic chapel was crowded with them. My father, though always averse to political partizanship, felt strongly the justice of the claim of the Catholics, simply on the ground of the right of every subject to religious as well as civil liberty. In public and in private, therefore, he espoused their cause while he opposed their religion.

Things came to a high pitch of excitement in the old city on this agitated question. At length, a great open-air public meeting was resolved upon, and the vast area of Queen-square was fixed on as the place. To this meeting Mr. Leifchild would have paid little attention, had he not been informed that another dissenting minister in the city, the Rev. W. Thorp, was about to appear at it as the advocate of the exclusion of the Catholics. Impatient that no other minister would agree to go and oppose Mr. Thorp, and fearful that all of them would be misrepresented, he determined to repair to Queen-square, and himself advocate the cause of civil and religious liberty.

It was a bold thing to do, but he would do it; and on the appointed morning he went down to the Square, taking me by the hand—for I, in my boyish enthusiasm, had declared I would stand by him to the death. As we passed down into the busier streets, we saw numbers making for the Square; and so soon as we entered it, an immense and rapidly-increasing multitude appeared before us. Hustings were erected in the middle, and to them we bent our steps. "Make way for his reverence!"

came forth from many an Irish pauper or labourer. Way was made for his reverence, though with difficulty, and we ascended to the platform. Once there, the scene was exciting enough. Over that great area, which I believe is nearly as extensive as that of Lincoln's-inn Fields, a tumultuous mob was gathering, and directing its concentrating companies towards ourselves. Exclamations most wrathful were heard on all sides, and anon shouts of rivalry and defiance rent the air.

The meeting was commenced by the mayor, who was in the chair. Speeches were delivered, but mostly fell unheard. Gesticulation was visible enough, but was almost the only sign that the orators were engaged in addressing the multitude. Occasionally, indeed, we could catch the word "Gentlemen," and could not but think it very inappropriate, as we looked at the motley group below us.

At length the Rev. Mr. Thorp was announced as a speaker; and edging his difficult way to the front of the platform, he essayed to speak. Before he commenced, however, a gentleman on our side cried aloud, "Hear a dissenting minister against civil and religious liberty;" and then my father, forcing himself up to the chairman, thus addressed him, "Sir, I claim to speak as long a time, in reply to Mr. Thorp, as he occupies in his speech." Thereupon Mr. Thorp bent down and whispered to the chairman, who was supposed to say, "He claims as long a time as you occupy." The would-be orator waved his hand, and essayed to begin, but in vain. The enraged Irish shouted against him with increasing bitterness. His friends shouted for him, and so increased his difficulty. Just at this time a missile was thrown at him, and narrowly missed him. Turning pale, he withdrew a few steps, and his opportunity—if, indeed, he ever had one—was gone.

Soon afterwards the meeting terminated, for it was useless to prolong a mere dumb show. As we wound our way homewards, an Irishman solicited a donation from his "reverence, to buy

himself his other shoe; for hadn't he flung his best shoe at that ould sinner Thorp, to stop his ugly mouth?"

Glad enough were we to reach our home in safety, and to repose in the quietude of Old Park House, after the distracting clamours of the immense multitude in Queen Square.

Although Mr. Thorp's mouth was stopped, his pen was not hindered, for there issued from the press the speech which he had *intended* to deliver, and, soon after, a second speech, which also he had intended to deliver. One intended though undelivered speech might have been borne; but a second of the same character seemed intolerable to Mr. Leifchild, at least without an attempt to answer it. He therefore had recourse to the press, and supplied "A Christian Antidote to Unreasonable Fears at the Present Crisis, in Reply to the Second Printed Speech of the Rev. W. Thorp against Catholic Emancipation;" and this "Christian Antidote" was favourably received, reaching a second edition.*

In the preface the writer says, "If the author of the speech had not announced his intention of delivering it, and thus, as I conceive, of publicly opposing righteous principles, I should not have offered myself in person before the assembly in Queen-square or if, after the failure of his attempt to deliver his speech, he had refrained from its publication, I too should calmly have left the question to the debates and counsels of those high and competent authorities to whom it belongs. But as I flatter myself I should have answered the speech *viva voce*, had it been delivered, in perfect good temper, so now I reply to it by my pen, with unfeigned good-will both to the author and his numerous friends, but with no slight anxiety to supply what counteraction I am able to opinions so discreditable to him and to them as Christians and Dissenters, and so injurious in their influence upon the inhabitants of Bristol."

* London: Samuel Bagster, 1829.

As this is the only publication of its author upon a political subject, it may be well to say that it displays considerable ability as well as good temper. It abounds with noble sentiments, well expressed, several of which have a general bearing upon broad principles. It may, indeed, be regarded as readable even at this day, for in these pages we have both the man and the citizen. With manly candour, for instance, he pays a tribute of praise to the Irish nation in these terms:—"I cannot deny myself the pleasure of making a reference here to the noble and generous character of the Irish nation. A more forgiving, grateful, and affectionate people do not exist under the sun. A quicker susceptibility to kindness no nation can evince; and the firmness of their attachment, when once bound to you, I cannot suffer to be disputed. And is this the people that we must only drive and coerce? And shall a conciliatory measure not once be tried? Shall the healing hand that would apply it be driven back by empirics, who know neither the constitution of the patient nor the nature of the remedy?"

There was another public occasion on which Mr. Leifchild came prominently forward on behalf of liberty—"liberty to the captive." It was at a monthly lecture against slavery. How he entered upon and conducted this lecture may be briefly noticed.

The ministers of Bristol were then (and, I believe, still are) in the habit of taking up important topics in monthly lectures, on week-evenings, at the several principal chapels successively. The subject of slavery being proposed for one such lecture, no brother seemed inclined to accept the post of lecturer. In truth, it was a perilous one at that time, and for that city, where the West India interest was very strong, and a pro-slavery feeling very generally prevalent. Whoever took up the topic was sure to be unpopular in the city, and not likely to be successful in the chapel. Mr. Leifchild, however, the friend of Wilberforce and Stephen, felt his spirit stirred within him at what he deemed pusillanimity of his brethren. "I will take that subject,"

exclaimed he, "if no other brother will." Very readily was his proposal acceded to. He was the best man—his brethren had no doubt of it—and no one would do more justice to the principles of human liberty.

One of the largest chapels in Bristol—the Tabernacle—seating, I think, about twelve hundred people, was assigned for that lecture. When it was fully announced, and when the time for its delivery drew near, the intending lecturer began to discover that he had not miscalculated the civic odium or the general excitement. On the appointed evening he repaired to the Tabernacle, taking me (as usual on such exciting occasions) by the hand, and seeing his wife and young son placed in a convenient pew. The chapel was nearly filled, and an uneasy feeling seemed to prevail. Strange and angry faces were there; and as the minister ascended the pulpit stairs, evident dissatisfaction was manifested. There were, indeed, some apprehensions of a disturbance;* but order was kept, and the preacher delivered a lecture, or sermon, of great length, and with great animation. All passed off peaceably, and the principle which the lecturer had determined to advocate had been advocated before a large and attentive, if not an entirely assenting audience.

The consequences of his bold and manly conduct as a public man were favourably felt at his chapel, in augmenting the congregation. This result shall be given in his own words:—

"From the notice I had attracted in attending to the various calls of the numerous societies in the city, the opening of chapels, anniversary services, lectures, and speeches at public meetings, I soon found more than enough to do. Several joined our church and congregation from C. G. Chapel, where the Rev. Mr. T. was the minister, though I was far from encouraging this

* "The owners of West India property, many of whom were residents, exclaimed vociferously against all attempts to reduce the slave-trade; and I was threatened at a public meeting for that purpose, by men of this description."—*Autobiographical Note.*

movement, as it drew upon me much envy and ill-will. I found the air of Bristol soft and relaxing, like that of Kensington, so that I was scarcely able to meet the numerous demands made upon me with the requisite promptitude and efficiency. But the members of my church were most affectionate, cordial, and co-operative, and I found myself surrounded with a large number of efficient instruments.

“It now became necessary that the chapel should be enlarged, by adding pews to a space left vacant at the entrance. These were immediately occupied with new attendants. Still the cry was heard, ‘More room!’ To obtain this was very difficult, owing to the situation of the building. Projects for meeting this demand were the subjects of frequent conversation, and, unhappily, only of conversation. Thus the time for action passed away. I did not interfere, but merely reminded the people of the Shakesperian lines, ‘There is a tide in the affairs of men,’ &c.

“The applications for membership, more especially from the young, and some very young persons, were so numerous, that my deacons, being unused to such a state of things, hesitated, and wished for delay. But upon my undertaking to answer for the young, as not unlikely to turn out well, while it would be in vain to wait for the middle-aged and the elderly, they consented to their admission. We had every reason to rejoice at this determination. Of about one hundred such young persons, whom I admitted during my pastorate at Bridge-street, there were scarcely more than three or four who did not become a source of continual comfort to me, and a credit to the cause. The young require great tenderness of treatment, and that the terms of admission to membership be not made too strict and formal. By his kindness the minister may reach *their* minds very readily; and why should a church which has confidence in *him* demand more than his satisfaction with young candidates? I know the responsibility which is incurred by their admission; and this

made me doubly careful in my inquiries about, and scrutiny into, the lives of all such as I brought forward."

"I think," wrote Mr. Leifchild, "I was particularly useful among the young. At Miss Carter's seminary I addressed the young people quarterly, and no less than seven decided converts came from her house. It was amongst this class that I had been most useful at Kensington; several boarding-schools having attended upon my ministry there. In various parts of the country I have met with individuals who there received the truth savingly from my lips. I have received many delightful testimonies to this effect. Not for my own credit do I mention this, but to the praise of the glory of divine grace."

These young people presented to him a copy of Charles Taylor's edition of Calmet's "Dictionary of the Holy Bible," in five very handsomely-bound quarto volumes, in which was the subjoined inscription:—

TO THE REV. JOHN LEIFCHILD

These Volumes are presented,

As a tribute of affectionate esteem,

From the young people of his Church and Congregation.

BRISTOL, *March*, 1828.

Not only the young but also the middle-aged, and some more advanced in life, were added to the church by this pastor's ministry. Amongst these was a singular instance of what outwardly appeared to be merely a happy accident. Mrs. P., one of the congregation at Castle-green Chapel, being too late for the usual service there one Sabbath evening, tarried at Bridge-street Chapel, which lay in her way. Only one seat upon a form in the aisle could be found for her. The minister himself has penned the result:—

"She had been reading, in the afternoon, Bunyan's tract, entitled, 'Come and Welcome to Jesus.' My text, which she was just in time to hear, was, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will

in no wise cast out.' The coincidence of the subjects fixed her attention. She was rivetted to the spot, and did not move once until the close, when, as she declared, she found herself too stiff to rise at once (the preacher being generally long in his sermons). That night was the turning one in her life. She went home thoughtful, and there wept and prayed. She now became a regular attendant at Bridge-street, and the change in her character was observed by many of her friends. At length she came to my house, and trembled with apprehension when she knocked at the door. Upon seeing Mrs. Leifchild she burst into a flood of tears, and then narrated the above tale. Mrs. L. soothed her, and she was soon able to see and converse with me. She was admitted to the church, and ever afterwards continued firm in her attachment, and an ornament to her religious profession." It may be added, that no old friend was more affected on seeing my father when he revisited Bristol than Mrs. P. At his revisitation, she had removed from a humble to a commodious residence, and had prospered in the things of this world as well as in those of another. She attributed all to my father's ministry, and never forgot my mother's kindness in her hour of religious anxiety.

Another gratifying instance of my father's usefulness to a female, who was on her way to Castle-green Chapel, but casually tarried at Bridge-street Chapel, may appropriately follow the preceding narrative. It came to the minister's knowledge only in 1853, and, singularly enough, in his vestry at Craven Chapel, London, at a meeting of a pleasant and useful association of ladies, named the Amicable Society, which he and my mother had founded, and which they constantly fostered. The narrative was penned by my father from recollection, after a meeting of this Society, and is dated March 8th, 1853.

"Miss W., a member of the Amicable Society, gave this night the following account of her conversion:—

"I once thought myself a converted person, from my regu-

larly hearing the word preached, and my association with Christians. But, alas! I was, all the while, only a wayside hearer. About twenty-four years ago, I went to reside for a time at Bristol. The people with whom I stayed were followers of a Mr. Cowan, who had left the Established Church, and collected a small company of pious persons to attend on his ministry, who considered themselves in an advanced state of knowledge and piety, and that the *Gospel* was alone amongst them. I had heard of a Mr. Thorp in that city as a celebrated preacher, and wished to hear him. But the family with whom I resided, and whom it was my interest to oblige, wished me not to go, saying, they knew he did not preach the Gospel. I resolved, however, to go. On the next Sunday, I went out with them, but left my umbrella behind, for a pretence to go back. Accordingly, I returned, but instead of following them, I sought Mr. Thorp's place. I was told it was at Castle Green, and I went over the Bridge, from St. Mary, Redcliffe, inquiring for Castle Green. I was directed to some steps, and as I ascended I heard (without being able to see any place of worship) the most melodious singing. On reaching the top, I saw it was a chapel, over a house in the lower street, called Bridge-street. I entered, but could hardly get in for the crowd. But I saw a lusty gentleman in the pulpit, and as I had heard Mr. Thorp was stout, I concluded it was he. What I heard, affected me in an unusual manner. When I returned home, in answer to the inquiry whither I had been, I stated, "to hear Mr. Thorp." "But how did you find the place?" "Oh, it was on the top of some steps, which I went up." "Ah, that was not Mr. Thorp, but another popular minister, who does not, however, preach the Gospel." "But I shall hear him," I said, "on Thursday evening, when he preaches again." As I was going, a Mr. B., one of Mr. Cowan's people, overtook me, and putting his hand on my shoulder, endeavoured to dissuade me from endangering my soul by going elsewhere. Seeing me reluctant, he determined to accompany me, to point out the errors in what would

be brought before me. As we came out of the chapel, he said he had little thought the Gospel was so preached there. Resolved, however, to hear Mr. Thorp, I went next Sabbath evening to Castle-green Chapel. The same minister I had heard at Bridge-street had exchanged with him, and was in the pulpit. His text was, "And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." I saw what I was, and I sought and found the Lord. I have never lost Him since.

" 'Wonder not, dear Sir, that I am attached to your ministry,' exclaimed Miss W., 'and ever shall be. Mr. B., who attended with me, as you may still remember, soon afterwards fell ill, and finding he was near death, would have no one to visit him but yourself.'

"We all joined in thankfulness to God for an account which she had been insensibly drawn out to deliver, having kept the pleasing information from me for all the intervening years."

Wherever Mr. Leifchild might be situated, every part of the vicinity would be sure to be regarded by him in relation to his great work. Thus on repairing to Clevedon, on the coast, about twelve miles from Bristol, for brief relaxation, he found it destitute of the preaching of the Gospel. Speedily and resolutely he associated some friends in the enterprise, and a small chapel was built, and a church formed therein.* He then published a graphic account of Clevedon and its scenery in the newspapers and periodicals, and thereby drew considerable attention and many visitors to that locality. A high Churchman, whose house the chapel adjoined, was so mortified at its erection, that he filled up the space between the two buildings with a rough brick wall of unsightly frontage to the chapel. This wall, however, soon became covered with ivy and creeping plants, and proved a pleasing ornament.

* I have met with a written history of the origination of this church, by which it appears that it was principally due to my father's efforts.

It is satisfactory to know that the Gospel has been preached ever since that date in Clevedon, and a new chapel erected since the great enlargement of the village, and its increase in population. My father spent many happy days there, was greatly beloved by the chapel-goers, and materially assisted them by his preaching and his influence. Thither, too, he conveyed the celebrated Robert Hall, and in that little chapel the great preacher delivered one of his most profound and beautiful sermons, that on the "Substitution of Christ," now printed in Volume I. of his works.

SECTION II.

A wealthy manufacturer in Bristol, Mr. Hare, at that time one of my father's flock, had liberally built a commodious chapel at Bedminster, and had arranged that Dr. Chalmers should "open it;" that is, preach the first sermon in it. Upon the announcement of this arrangement, the religious inhabitants of Bristol were in high expectation of the great Scottish preacher's arrival and oratory. It was understood that he would reach the city before the Sunday preceding the day appointed for the opening (a week-day), and it was fully expected that he would on the Sabbath be one of Robert Hall's hearers. Great man as Mr. Hall undoubtedly was, he was not great enough to be fearless of other great men; and so soon as he heard who was coming, he found it convenient on that particular Sunday to exchange with an unsuspecting Baptist brother.

On that Sunday morning my father rose very unwell, and was troubled with a severe headache. Unable to find a suitable substitute at so brief warning, he rode down to his chapel thinking rather of a doctor of medicine than a doctor of divinity. On reaching his little vestry he began to prepare some medicine with which he had provided himself, and was sitting with aching head when in came the quaint old pew-opener, and adjusting his spectacles and wig, abruptly exclaimed, "Well, I do wonder what all the people find to stare at. I see nothing wonderful in

him. He's much about such another man as yourself." "Who?" inquired my father. "Why the great Dr. Chalmers, to be sure," rejoined the official; "he is in Mr. Hare's pew, and all the people are staring at him." To beat a retreat was impossible, to ask Dr. Chalmers to preach was too plainly useless, to preach himself was too plainly a necessity, and out walked the minister of the chapel from his vestry, heavy in head, and heavy at heart, along passages and round corners of pews, up the numerous stairs, and into his pulpit, to preach without manuscript or note; with nothing indeed before him by way of help, except the presence of the famous Dr. Chalmers.

Languidly and rather nervously—in a manner the very opposite to his usual one—did he get through his sermon and the service. In the little vestry, when he returned to it, Dr. Chalmers took his hand, thanked him for some useful suggestions, and then and there those two great men initiated an acquaintance, which, but for distance of residences and consequent lack of opportunities for personal intercourse, might and assuredly would have ripened into an intimate friendship.

On the appointed day the new chapel was opened, and Dr. Chalmers read an elaborate discourse, to which reference will presently be made in a note by Mr. Leifchild. He had nearly all the dissenting ministers in Bristol amongst his hearers. Afterwards he dined at Mr. Hare's mansion with some of the principal luminaries of the vicinity. Chalmers, however, did not then shine in conversation, or would not engross it. Others were afraid of him, and would not open their lips except in submissive whispers. Hall and my father were there, and talked to each other, for lack of freedom with Chalmers. Altogether it was a failure as "a feast of reason and a flow of wit;" and, as in so many similar instances, great men were gathered together by a great effort, and finally separated, wondering at each other for saying so little.

It may be here added, with relation to Dr. Chalmers and my

father, that as this was the first so it was the last opportunity they ever had of unrestrained conversation. Still, a friendly feeling sprang up between them, and for as many as seventeen years Dr. Chalmers retained a pleasant recollection of this meeting; for in addressing a note of thanks to my father on receiving from him a donation to the distressed Highlanders in 1847, he concludes thus:—"I cannot think that I am wrong in identifying you with the minister of that name whom I had the pleasure of meeting in 1830, when visiting Mr. Hare at Bristol." Moreover, I myself benefited by this remembrance, for upon calling upon Dr. Chalmers in Edinburgh, and announcing my name, he cordially greeted me, inquired most kindly after my father, and invited me to breakfast with him at his house at Morningside, a few miles from Edinburgh.

A very pleasant hour or two I spent in company with the Doctor in the midst of his family. He referred to Bristol and my father again, and finally walked some part of the way back with me towards Edinburgh. Notwithstanding the very unfavourable specimen he had of my father's pulpit powers, I am informed by a friend that he formed a high opinion of the minister of Bridge-street Chapel, principally perhaps from what he had heard of him, and not from him, at Bristol.

During the period of Mr. Leifchild's residence at Bristol, that city was in its Augustan age, and so far as religious talent and literature were concerned it was then most highly favoured. It may be satisfactory to quote my father's own words on this matter:—

"Bristol, while I resided there, rose in a religious point of view to great eminence. It was the time of its gracious visitation. Mr. Foster resided near it, and had delivered lectures which excited and raised the intellects of thinking men. Mr. Thorp had a general fame, and shone as a lecturer upon some occasions. Mr. Roberts, the Baptist minister, had a strong talent and drew many hearers; while Dr. Ryland and Mr. Crisp, tutors of the Baptist Academy, and preachers at Broadmead Chapel, exercised

great influence by their acknowledged learning and excellent character. Bridge-street Chapel, where I ministered, was crowded, and after having been enlarged once, needed still further enlargement.

"Some wealthy persons contributed largely to our several institutions. At Bridge-street Chapel alone we raised between four and five hundred pounds annually for the London Missionary Society. We had also a monthly lecture, which was so well attended that scarcely any chapel was too large to hold the concourse of people.

"A philosophical institution was established in Park-street, at which Dr. Pritchard and Dr. Richard Smith lectured on subjects of comparative anatomy, and Mr. Bridges and others on various literary topics.

"A spirit of zeal and emulation pervaded the different bodies, and all was life and activity. Then came Mr. Hall, and threw the splendour of his great mind over our whole dissenting interest. Visitors from all parts of the country wished to hear him, and some from distant parts of the world came to see him as well as Mr. Foster.

"Bristol was now becoming the second city of the empire, and began to feel a little elevated in consequence."

The foregoing general remarks are appropriately introductory to my father's particular notice of the two most eminent of the religious men above named, Robert Hall and John Foster. Respecting the former of these, his friend and brother minister proceeds to say :—

"The settlement of Mr. Hall at Broadmead Chapel brought great *eclat* to the dissenting interest at Bristol. Strangers from all parts flocked to hear him on Sabbath mornings. I lost but one hearer, my own servant, whom I recommended to his church, as she had been benefited by his ministry. He was so pleased at this act on my part, that he said to me, ' Mr. Leifchild, it shall be tit-for-tat ; you have recommended your servant to attend my ministry,

I have recommended my own daughter to attend yours.' And this she did constantly (being then at a school where the young ladies frequented Bridge-street Chapel).

"I contrived to hear him often on Thursday evenings preceding the Ordinance Sunday, and was always delighted and edified. We went together to a great number of anniversary services, and I enjoyed much of his conversation. At first, I fancied it would be difficult to preach before him, but I found him to be so kind and candid, and sometimes even commendatory, that at length this difficulty wore off.

"I learnt from him that most of his great sermons were first worked out in thought, and inwardly elaborated in the very words in which they were delivered. Thus they were held so tenaciously in the memory that he could repeat them *verbatim* at the distance of years. He ridiculed the delusion of those who supposed that the perorations of his sermons were delivered *impromptu*, observing that they were the most carefully studied parts of the whole discourse.

"He had an intimate knowledge of character, and sometimes described to me in a single sentence the exact character of individuals whom we both knew. Hearing that Dr. Chalmers was about to visit Bristol and was coming to hear him, he sent word that unless he assured him he would not be present that morning, he would not preach. He told me that he had once heard Dr. Chalmers at Leicester, and was so electrified that he then determined he would never preach before him. How afraid these great men are of one another!

"From similar reasons he declined attending 'Association Meetings,' where several ministers officiated before each other. 'What is it, Sir,' said he, 'but preaching for a *hat*?'—alluding, I suppose, to the fact that a hat is the prize in some games amongst the lower classes."

My father does not mention Mr. Hall's estimate of his own power in practical preaching; a paragraph may, therefore, be quoted from

Mr. Morris's "Biographical Recollections of the Rev. Robert Hall, M.A." (p. 486):—

"After he (Mr. Hall) removed to Bristol, and became acquainted with the excellent Mr. Leifchild, he entertained similar sentiments of veneration and esteem; and on one occasion, after preaching in connexion with his friend, he was heard to say that his own discourse was in comparison so inferior that 'contempt itself could not sink low enough to reach it.' This, of course, was an extravagance of humility; nevertheless, more sober remarks at different times proved that not one of Mr. Leifchild's hearers better appreciated him than Robert Hall."

To resume my father's notes on Mr. Hall: he observes—

"It is commonly known that he had contracted Dr. Johnson's habit of beginning most of his sentences in conversation with 'Sir,' and of interposing it very frequently.

"We were present, together with several ministers, at the opening of Mr. Hare's new chapel at Bedminster, on which occasion Dr. Chalmers preached the morning sermon. In the course of it he took occasion to commend ornamental building, and described most vividly the beauty of a landscape with its village spire pointing to heaven. When we all dined together afterwards, Dr. Chalmers was thanked for his 'admirable discourse,' to which Mr. Hall expressed only a qualified assent. Some of us who were near him pressed him to say what he really thought about the part on village spires, when he simply said, 'Apocryphal, Sir, apocryphal.'

"The preacher of the evening not being a favourite with Mr. Hall, he begged to be left to himself in the house. After a long service we returned, and I asked him if he did not feel weary of solitude. 'No, Sir,' he replied, 'I have been well occupied; I read the whole of Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns—quite through, Sir,—every one of them, Sir—a thing I have never done before, nor ever thought of doing—every one of them, Sir, I read to you.'

"He observed, respecting a sermon preached by a Baptist minister at Broadmead Chapel on the discouraging signs and then the encouraging ones in the present condition of Christianity in this country, that it reminded him of a man driving two pigs to market, when one every now and then got behind the other, until the man whipping them up alternately brought them both in together to market."

A friend of my father's and of Mr. Hall communicated the following observations to the former.

"These were his observations on three sermons which he and I heard many years ago:—

"'Well, Mr. Hall, what did you think of the first sermon, the morning one?' His reply was, 'Horrid, Sir, horrid; very much like death upon a mopetick.'

"'But you surely don't think so of the second sermon?'

"'Very tame, Sir, very tame, indeed; very much like the chirping of a sparrow in Windsor Forest.'

"'But what do you say of Mr. Fuller's sermon, Sir?'

"'O, he embowelled the text and showed us all that was in it.'"

Continuing his notices of Mr. Hall, my father states —

"He did not object to a man's consciousness of his superiority if it were real, and above all things he admired candour. I was present with him when Dr. McAll was preaching at the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel at Cheltenham. When the preacher afterwards saw Mr. Hall in the vestry, he said, 'I am glad, Mr. Hall, that I have had you for a hearer; I shall be gratified by hearing your opinion of the sermon, for I know it will be a just one, and I shall profit by it.' Mr. Hall was delighted with the speaker's manliness, and most judiciously commended the discourse.

"He could be blunt, and almost insulting. A Baptist minister of Bristol, who had travelled with him in Wales, where they had heard Christmas Evans (a celebrated Welch preacher), was listening to Mr. Hall's vivid description of the power of that extra-

ordinary man's address, appearance, and preaching, 'But, Sir,' observed his companion, 'you remember that he had but one eye.' 'One eye, Sir,' exclaimed Mr. Hall, 'why, Sir, if I had a thousand such eyes as yours I would give them all for that one.'

"He often expressed himself extravagantly, and as some would think profanely, but this arose from the force of his conceptions. Once referring to the difficulty of finding a dwelling-house in all respects pleasing to his wife, he said to me with seriousness, 'I believe, Sir, if a council were called in heaven, with Gabriel as the chief, they couldn't suit Mrs. Hall with a house; I do believe it, Sir.'

"Shortly after Mr. Hall's settlement at Bristol, I accompanied him to an ordination service at a chapel at Wells, Somersetshire. As far as I can recollect I was to give 'The Charge' to the minister, and he was to preach to the people in the evening. Although I had gone with him on several ministerial excursions and had preached before him, I had not then acquired full confidence in his disposition to hear me candidly and considerately; I therefore contrived to leave him either at the inn, or in a friend's house, and I remember that I strictly charged the landlady or hostess not to awake him or disturb him, for he had fallen fast asleep, either from the fatigues of the journey or the effects of opium which he was compelled to take to mitigate his sufferings.

"On rising in the pulpit to commence my charge to the minister, I felt relieved at the absence of Mr. Hall as a hearer; but had scarcely proceeded to speak before I espied Mr. Hall directly before me, in his usual reclining posture, looking up at me with great attention and apparent expectation. 'Did you think, Sir,' said he afterwards, 'that I was to be detained by any woman? No, no, Sir, I soon woke up, and hastened after you.'

"Many years afterwards I was reminded in a very pleasing manner of this charge, in the delivery of which Mr. Hall's presence had made me rather uncomfortable. At a dinner following

the ordination of a young minister at Nailsworth, near Stroud, (Gloucestershire,) at which latter place Mr. Wheeler was then the minister, that gentleman rose and in a feeling manner adverted to the charge I had addressed to him at Wells. He then stated solemnly and with emotion that the said address had given an impulse to him in his ministry which he had never before experienced, and that the influence had remained with him to that day. 'Whatever I have been,' added he, 'as a minister, and whatever I am now, I owe to that charge.'

"Mr. Hall was averse to being questioned upon points to which no satisfactory replies could be given, at least by himself. He was also unwilling to expatiate in the region of prophecy, although he seemed at one time to favour the notion of a pre-millennial advent of our Lord. When I proceeded to press him with the difficult questions attending the theory of the personal appearance, such as whether it would be local, and whether it would be tangible, and how such conditions could comport with others opposite to them, he suddenly became impatient, and exclaimed, 'Very true, Sir, very true; but come, Mr. Leifchild, let us have no more of that; no more, Sir.'

"In like but milder manner he terminated a conversation I commenced with him upon the supposed vehicular clothing of disembodied spirits, as explanatory of the obscure passage, 'Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon.' I then suggested to him that probably in that passage the apostle was expressing the idea that if he were allowed to choose whether he might be *translated* without dying, like the believers who would be alive at the last day, he should prefer that course; but since he could not make the choice, he was willing to put off the body by ordinary death and so be with Christ, rather than to remain encumbered with it in the present condition.

"To this view Mr. Hall quietly assented, but would not discuss the question.

"He was very simple in his prayers after he came to Bristol,

especially at the family services in the houses he visited. I think he reined in his imagination in these engagements, and purposely checked all tendency to its indulgence. In such prayers his sentiments and expressions were quite of the common order, and gave one no idea whatever of the opulence of his intellect, or his alleged fastidiousness in the choice of terms.

“He objected to much particularizing of individuals in prayer, and especially to eulogizing ministers on such occasions. Yet he insensibly fell into the same habit himself, for I had to request him not to allude to me so pointedly and flatteringly as he generally did, when I was present at his Thursday-evening services previous to the Sacramental Sundays.

“During a journey to Clevedon he observed:—‘The first effort of the mind, when discerning new objects or persons, is to detect resemblances, the next to find out differences.’”

My father had proposed to Mr. Hall an excursion to Clevedon, and there I was much in his society. Young school-boy, as I then was, this great yet condescending man took a special interest in me, and requested that I might accompany him in occasional rides on horseback. Quite incapable as I then was of reaching the intellectual range of my friend's thoughts, I nevertheless enjoyed his society; and recollect his sayings to this day, as well as his familiar and distinguishing notice of me whenever he met me after this time of our equestrian companionship.

“What are you reading, Sir?” was his inquiry of me, when we began to ride out together. “The Iliad, Sir,” I replied. “A fine poem, Sir, don't you think so?” asked he again. “Very fine,” added I; “but, Mr. Hall, do you really think Homer was born blind as they say?” “Born blind, Sir? Homer born blind!” rapidly returned my friend, “why, Sir, whoever says Homer was born blind, was born blind himself, born blind himself, Mr. Leifchild.”

As relates to my father, it may be doubted if he ever met with a man of such acknowledged power of mind with whom he felt

equally congenial. They were one in heart and hope; they travelled and preached together at anniversaries and ordinations, and they held long and animated conversations in friends' houses, in their own dwellings, in vestries and in vehicles. In several of their journeys I accompanied them. I rode with them from Bristol to Wells, and can now in imagination see Mr. Hall smoking and reclining on one seat of the carriage while my father sat on the other. I can see Mr. Hall descending at a blacksmith's shop to re-light his pipe, making his way directly to the forge, and jumping aside with unwonted agility when a huge dog growled at him. I can recall his look when rallied on his agility, after his return to the carriage, "You seemed afraid of the dog, Sir," said my father. "Apostolic advice, Sir, 'Beware of dogs,'" rejoined Mr. Hall.

They were both men of mark and power in the pulpit—the one imaginative, the other practical. They were both men of liberal minds and liberal measures. They both hated bigotry and narrowness. They were both genial and generous—even to inconsideration. Men of high impulses and broad views, they were akin not only in creed but in expansiveness.

It was well that two such men should commune and converse for a few years together, and it was noble in each of them to acknowledge the gifts and excellences of the other. They were too humble to be jealous, too amiable to be envious, too diverse to be rivals, and only happy in being friends.

We now turn to a very different but equally gifted Baptist minister, who at this time resided near Bristol—the much-esteemed essayist, John Foster, whose *Essays* "On a Man's Writing Memoirs of Himself," and "On Decision of Character," were so highly commended by Sir James Macintosh in these words:—"I have read with the greatest admiration the *Essays* of Mr. Foster. He is one of the most profound and eloquent writers that England has produced."

The writings and the personal communications of this profound thinker so deeply interested and influenced my father, and

formed so frequent a subject of conversation in his later life, that I feel warranted to add such particulars of Mr. Foster's life, habits, and sayings as came under my father's notice, and were often referred to by him. These, moreover, may prove acceptable to those who have perused, or may yet peruse, the works and the "Life and Correspondence of John Foster."

First, let this man, so retired in his habits and his haunts, be described as I myself recollect him at home, when taken by my father to accompany himself and some stranger bent upon an interview with the well-known author.

Imagining ourselves on the road to Stapleton, a few miles from Bristol, we at length arrive before a low, square dwelling, secluded and walled in, and bearing the inscription, "Milton Cottage." The gentlemen alight and enter the cottage, one leading by the hand a restless and inquisitive lad. Into a modestly furnished parlour they are now introduced, and while the two visitors take their seats demurely, the lively lad is slowly stealing round the room, and mounting upon chairs to scan fine and rare prints suspended from the walls. Presently the door opens, and in steps a gentleman in very plain attire, and of rather uncouth yet deeply meditative appearance—a benignant expression of countenance, or rather of the eyes, soon removes any secret disappointment from the mind of the visitor, who now beholds Mr. Foster for the first time.

The stranger is now formally introduced by Mr. Leifchild, and quietly but kindly received by Mr. Foster. Conversation at once commences, probably upon some topic of passing interest. This has not proceeded far before attention is drawn to the inattentive and restless school-boy, who is evidently more physically than intellectually active. His father apologizes for his inquietude and proposes to eject him into the garden—a proposal to which the boy gladly assents, holding in pleasing remembrance certain gooseberry bushes and currant trees which he had attacked aforetime. Out, therefore, goes the lad with a strong

parental caution against stealing the fruit, and an equally strong admonition to eat all he could get on the part of the proprietor of the fruit. "Be sure you do not touch the currants," exclaims the father. "Take them all, my boy," exclaims Mr. Foster.

Conversation upon many themes now proceeds in the parlour. The visitor, whoever or whatever he may be, is questioned on all that he is supposed to know in particular; and if he attempts to correct his querist, finds that he has mistaken his man. Information of this kind being exhausted, or offering a pause, Mr. Leif-child puts in an observation, for the purpose of eliciting Mr. Foster's opinions. The latter immediately turns to the minister of Bridge-street Chapel, with marked kindness and cordial freedom. A well-tempered sarcasm may be uttered on either or on both sides. The active minister objects to the inactivity of the meditative recluse: first expatiating on his powers and his capabilities; then acknowledging his own obligations to his writings; and, finally, gently reproaching him with his self-imposed silence. He exposes its sinfulness; he grows warm upon the waste of talent so distinguished and so widely acknowledged. He invites the tenant of Milton Cottage to his own house, and offers him his own pulpit. He will do anything to bring him before his people and the public. He will himself listen or not; he will assist or not; he will announce the preacher or not. But "No;" and yet not no, decidedly; only the usual evasive "I will think of it, Sir, I will think of it,"—a formula of negation too well understood.

Soon politeness forbids a longer intrusion on meditative seclusion. The two gentlemen re-appear at the door, and walk half round the garden, accompanied by Mr. Foster, to recover the errant boy. The latter receives a kind and fatherly smile from the recluse, and renewed permission at any time to invade the same territory. The three then drive off towards Bristol, and the two seniors repeat the remarks of Mr. Foster by the way, and thus the boy becomes acquainted with them.

Many times was this kind of visitation repeated; and at length we became so familiar with Milton Cottage and its inmate, that no greater treat for a holiday could be proposed to the youth than a ride to and a short talk with John Foster. He had now lost his own and only son, and a peculiar tenderness seemed to characterize his notice of his friend's only son. He said little or nothing about his loss, but he felt it the more deeply; and probably, whenever he gazed upon the boy who so often accompanied his father, he keenly felt the contrast, and the vacancy occasioned in his own house and in his own heart.

In maturer years I have often thought how great was the contrast between the two men who so often met, and so cordially conversed in the parlour of Milton Cottage. There they sat, having in common a profound piety, and also in common penetrative intellects, associated with studious habits. They both devoutly held most—perhaps all but one—of the cardinal doctrines of evangelical religion. To the unobservant they might appear simply as two Congregational ministers, with only this principal distinction—that while the one was in full pastoral work, and generally acceptable, the other lived in comparative retirement. Yet in reality there could scarcely exist greater contrasts in two men viewing so many things in the same light.

Take, for instance, the doctrine of the depravity of human nature. As an article of creed, both believed and proclaimed it. But how different was the influence of this belief upon their lives and modes of thought! Mr. Foster held this doctrine so strongly and so deeply, that he appeared to despair of man's recovery. Therefore, as he looked abroad upon his generation, he sat with folded arms and melancholy forebodings. To him, an increase of population was merely an increase of sinners. "It is just saying there are so many more *sinners* in that locality. On the contrary, I am apt to be pleased at seeing vacated sites, and houses deserted and in ruins. I have always a restive

feeling at the promise made to the Jews, in the Old Testament, of a prodigiously multiplied posterity.”*

On the other hand, although my father also knew the world to be indescribably depraved, and his own generation to be unquestionably bad, yet he hoped and believed he could make it somewhat better. His dejected friend looked down into the abyss of blackness, and there fixed his hopeless gaze; he himself also glanced into the black abyss, but then quickly raised his eye to the sunny heavens. The former saw every man as he really was; the latter every man as he religiously might be. The one saw the world wrapped in gloomy night, without its glorious stars; the other looked lovingly upon the glorious stars, and half forgot the gloomy night. The one altogether shunned uncongenial society; the other entered it, and tried to make it congenial. Both hated with an almost passionate hatred the paltriness, the self-seeking, and the duplicity so frequently displayed all around them, and sometimes in their own circle; but while Foster mentally anatomised and morally anathematised an unworthy individual, Leifchild would simply mark that man, coldly pass him by, and go forward in eager expectation of discovering better specimens of humanity. If Foster was disappointed, he despaired; if my father was disappointed, he still hoped on. The recluse at Milton Cottage felt that, being born into a bad world, his best plan was to keep aloof from it. The active minister of Bridge-street Chapel was equally conscious that he had not come into a good world; but seeing that he must live in it, he would work in it and for it, he would preach to it, he would thunder at it, he would expose its baseness to its face, and then persuade it to religion and virtue. He would denounce it, but he would not doom it; nay, rather, he would show it the path of recovery, and paint with prophetic touch the dawning of its day of brightness—the

* *Life and Correspondence*, vol. ii., p. 320.

dimly-descried light of its renewal to holiness, and a reign of purity and righteousness, to be established upon the ruins of iniquity and impiety !

It was singular that these two men, of habits of mind so opposite, though in creed so nearly alike, should be drawn together by an almost unconscious attraction. The respect which Mr. Leifchild showed to Mr. Foster was founded upon the high estimate which he had formed of his powers of thinking; while the attention which Mr. Foster showed to him was probably founded upon the equally high estimate he had formed of my father's Christian character. Their opposites were so prominently conspicuous, that these men might have been unfriendly; yet their mutual esteem seemed to increase by conversational collision. They held the grand doctrine in reverence. If the one desponded in darkness where the other beheld gleams of light, they both cherished expectations where alone they can be justified. The atonement—the one sacrifice for sin—was the sole foundation on which they built; and before the Redeemer of the world these diversely gifted men bowed their spirits in humble adoration.

If two words could mentally characterise the two ministers, they would be Activity and Reflectiveness. Mr. Leifchild's activity was unceasing and wonderful. What he thought bore but a due proportion to what he did. Mr. Foster's reflectiveness, on the other hand, had grown into morbidness. That faculty, which is so sadly dwarfed in the mass of mankind, had in him, from long and pensive indulgence, become unhealthily developed. Free from any imperious call to action, living as a recluse, and peacefully pensive by nature, his thoughts made up his life, and his life was overlaid by his thoughts. These, too, mostly bore him on to perplexing futurity. The impulse to which allusion is made in the anecdote (p. 162) respecting his conduct on the Snowdonian precipice, was the fruit of an intense and unbounded desire to draw aside that veil behind which the Eternal has withdrawn himself, and with himself the whole

scenery of eternity. Listen only to his forcible expression of his state of mind in this direction :—

“ But that mysterious hereafter! We must submit to feel that we *are* in the dark, and have to walk by faith in the mere general fact of a conscious and retributive state immediately after death, revealed without definitions, illustrations, expansive into a field of varieties and specific forms. Still, a contemplative spirit hovers with insuppressible inquisitiveness about the dark frontier, beyond which it *knows* that wonderful realities are existing—realities of greater importance to it than the whole world on this side of that limit. We watch for some glimmer through any part of the solemn shade, but still are left to the faint, dubious resources of analogy, imagination, and conjecture, and are never satisfied with any attempt at a defined conception shaped by other minds or our own. If it be a conception indistinct and variable, and, so to speak, merely elemental, it does not take strong hold of the imagination; if it be reduced to a decided and specific delineation, it comes almost inevitably into so near an analogy to our terrestrial condition, that the mind recoils from it, both as being of too familiar and homely an aspect, and as being essentially improbable when we reflect what a mighty difference there *must* be in the mode, and perhaps the scene of existence, between the present state and that of a disembodied spirit. How changed must be the nature of our relations when we have passed away from under all known laws of the material world, and are received into the spiritual system?

“ But, after all our conjectures, imaginings, and almost impatient speculations, here we still are, in front of the awful, impervious veil. How striking to consider, while we stand here, that one and another of our friends, with us just as yesterday, inquisitively conversing, perhaps, on this very subject, are now at this instant in the midst of the reality—have experimental knowledge of two worlds, while we are yet confined to one.”

No man, probably, ever more intensely longed for direct inter-

course with some disembodied and departed friend. He imagined himself privileged to enjoy a brief visit from such an one, and then, with "an earnest inquisitiveness heretofore indulged in vain," he would have made such inquiries as these respecting the invisible state:—

"Where is it—in what realm of the creation—and have you an abode fixed in one locality? Do you exist as an absolutely unembodied spirit, or have you some material vehicle? and if so, of what nature? In what manner was it at your entrance *verified* to you that you were in another world? and with what emotion? Was an angel your conductor? How does the strange phenomenon *death* appear to you, now that you *look back* upon it? What thought or feeling have you respecting your deserted body? What is your mode of perceiving your external existence, and to what extent does this perception reach? Do you retain a vivid and comprehensive remembrance of the world and the life which you have quitted? Are you associated with the friends who preceded you in death? What is the manner of intercommunication? What are specifically your employments? What account do you take of time?" &c., &c.*

The man who could imagine and anticipate such an interview, and long for it passionately, and, as it were, prepare for it by a long series of questions like the preceding, was not likely to feel at home with the multitudes to whom death was a subject never to be thought of, and the other world a dream hardly to be realized. Nor would he even be very social in the society of ministerial brethren whose contemplativeness was less predominant, and who were more troubled about dissatisfied hearers than disembodied spirits. Action—unavoidable action—imperious calls to it, might have invigorated his mental constitution, and prompted him to say wise words to the people, and write fit books for the multitude. But in the long and retired lanes and roads

* Life and Correspondence of John Foster, vol. ii., p. 366.

which lay around his residence, this man of profound thoughts and moody religiousness meditated on things unrevealed and beings unseen, until the foreshadows of a dark eternity continually cast themselves across the fitful sunshine of his life; and finally that awful question, the eternity of future punishment, came in as the deepest, broadest, and most oppressive of all shadows, settling gloomily down upon his shrinking spirit. Meditating perpetually and painfully under this shadow, he was surprised that men who believe in this terrific doctrine can bear the sight of the living and doomed world around them. He gives vent to his emotions in such words as these:—"As to religious teachers, if the tremendous doctrine be true, surely it ought to be almost continually proclaimed as with the blast of a trumpet—inculcated and reiterated with ardent passion in every possible form of terrible illustration. No remission of alarm to thoughtless spirits!" &c., &c.*

Mr. Foster's fault lay in indulging almost exclusively the sadly contemplative powers of his great mind, and in looking persistently and principally towards the mysterious and the awful. Can any man dwell safely and complacently under such dread forebodings, under such midnight darkness? The Sun of Righteousness was his sun, but too often regarded as in eclipse. The cheering promises of the Gospel of Christ were too much overlooked. Life itself was one prolonged sorrow—for after death came the tremendous destiny of all unconverted spirits. Hope was a fallacy in the many; and as for himself, his own words announce his melancholy. "I am exceedingly far from indulging any gratifying anticipations with respect to *this* life." And then, as to the fairer part of humanity, around whom so many hopes gather, and so many felicitous fancies are wreathed: "I have uniformly a melancholy idea of the destiny of women, considering how many kinds of danger and how much of the grievances and

* See fully in "Life and Correspondence," vol. ii., p. 414.

sufferings of life there are often in their allotment. I marvel at the thoughtless pleasure of parents in seeing their children grow up, and dreaming about their future prospects! I often say, What is become of their eyes, or any of their senses, while there is the actual world around them, to tell them what is the very possible destiny in this life, to say nothing of another, of the young creatures about whom they have so many thoughtless, sanguine fancies?*

It would have been well for Foster if he had more frequently embraced opportunities for excursions amidst mountains and lakes and grand natural scenery, as well as into general and cultivated society. In truth, he himself admits this, in a letter written in the year 1820, in which he says,—“In favour of a mind too prone to melancholy musings, and a kind of pensive subsidence, I have no doubt that the most rigid morality and religion will give a full sanction to many liberties and expedients for exhilarations, especially excursions in quest of the interest and instruction afforded by seeing the diversities of nature and man.” When he did go forth and gaze upon scenes of beauty, he found “the wide field of nature a scene marked all over with mystical figures—the prints and traces, as it were, of superior spirits.” His melancholy might have been in great part alleviated by the common resources open to and embraced by others. Once after a tour in North Wales, during which he had, with his usual inquisitiveness, asked questions respecting mountains and prospects, he made impressive allusions in the evening prayer to the Divine goodness and greatness in furnishing our world so grandly for our enjoyment and instruction. He has been known to “linger by a huge, ancient tree in the park of Longleat, still reluctant to quit the spot, and as if half ready to take root over its giant trunk.” I remember, too, hearing while at Bristol, that in one of his village

* Life and Correspondence, vol. ii., p. 311.

sermons, near his own residence, he described a well-known old tree, spreading over the road which he and his congregation had passed; first naturally, and then in relation to the thoughts which might have been entertained, and the actions which might have been performed, by men passing or pausing under its branches. This he did so graphically that one of his hearers, an aged peasant, declared he had passed by that tree for forty or fifty years, and never "given it a thought;" but that Mr. Foster had now made so much of it, that he should never pass it again at night without fear. Particularly, the preacher had dwelt upon crimes which might have been meditated and possibly committed in the darkness under that umbrageous giant—and I think he had depicted a murderer as maturing his horrible purpose on that spot. Certainly the old villager was profoundly impressed, and affirmed that he never thought any person could preach like that about an old tree; and that for his part, though he didn't believe one half of it, yet he should always go home by another road at night.

It was a remarkable fact that Mr. Foster, the profound thinker and the fastidious writer, the man who could linger over one sentence for a whole day, should by choice or by force of circumstances become a village preacher—and that, too, in the vicinity of a large and populous city, where multitudes had no preacher, and in portions of which there were men and women as benighted as pagans. The thoughtful and inquisitive recluse, who could project his spirit beyond the boundaries of this world, and frame questions for an imaginary ghostly conversation, was content or compelled to address a few villagers gathered out of the bye-ways, and assembling to hear him as one who had gifts they did not comprehend, but at the same time was deficient in other gifts, which they could have readily appreciated.

The following passages, descriptive of Mr. Foster and of my father's visits to him, and conversations with him, are selected from his manuscript notes.

“Mr. Foster, the author of the celebrated ‘Essays,’ resided at Stapleton, near Bristol. Before my arrival in the city, he had delivered a series of lectures, on week-day evenings, at Broadmead Chapel, but discontinued them on account of the scantiness of the audience. At my instance, and that also of some other ministers, he resumed them, and now they were much better attended. He *read* them, but very impressively. There was in them a rich, deep vein of thought, which abundantly compensated for minor defects. His *forte* was the working out of a thought, and pursuing it through all its ramifications, in which you could not choose but follow him. From the naturalness with which one argument followed another as soon as it was suggested, I have been sometimes so beguiled in hearing him as not to remember where I was when he closed, having nothing before my mind but the train of thought in which he had been leading me. He lent the manuscripts of his lectures, after their delivery, to friends who copied them, and by this means I obtained the notes of several lectures.

“His prayers were unique, whether offered in the pulpit or in the family circle. Some one leading thought would be seized upon, and expanded until the worshipper might detect himself following the speaker’s mental excursion, rather than ascending to Heaven’s gate with supplications. Yet no one could say that *he* had not been devout, or that the religion which he (Foster) felt was not the religion of his heart.

“I was often induced to visit Stapleton for the purpose of introducing to him friends of mine from a distance, who were anxious to have a personal interview with so powerful a thinker and writer. He was easily accessible to me and very conversable, but always seeking to obtain information, and the particular knowledge his visitors might possess. It was his delight to read history and voyages and travels, as his published reviews show. He had a remarkable retentiveness of memory, though, as he stated, not for words but things. Mr. Ellis, the missionary, was

perfectly surprised at his knowledge of the South Sea Islands, which, indeed, in many points, was at least equal to his own.

“He was a fierce enemy to tyranny of every kind, whether civil or religious, and very bitter against it in his speech and his writings. Nor was he sufficiently guarded in some of his expressions, and so he alienated many from him who would otherwise have been his friends and admirers.

“His plodding perseverance in working out his thoughts made composition a thing most irksome to him. He told me that he spent three days in altering one sentence, and without being satisfied at last. He was so severe in his criticisms upon figures of speech, that he himself could hardly make one to his satisfaction, and this Robert Hall declared to be a retributive visitation. Yet his abstract style of thinking, lecturing, and writing had a beneficial effect upon me, and invigorated my own powers of thinking.

“Nothing could induce him to continue his public lectures after Mr. Hall’s arrival in Bristol as a resident. Although he heard him often at Broadmead, he was always obliged to sit out of sight, as Mr. Hall declared that if he saw him he would not preach. He met Mr. Hall in company several times, but on finding that they were likely to divide the attention of the listeners, or, perhaps, that two such men could not shine in the same sphere, he gradually withdrew from these unions, and only attended at more select circles.

“He had a singular manner of evading, but not directly refusing requests. He would promise to think of any request you made, but if unwelcome, you could never get him any further than thinking of it.

“While I was at Bristol, he lost his only son, and also his wife. These losses he bore with great outward equanimity, but I believe he was deeply wounded within.

“Great was his aversion to public meetings, set speeches, and great excitement—in which nothing could induce him to

join at any time. One day, at Mr. Cottle's house, he rallied our friend Mr. Hughes on *his* taste for such things, while Mr. Hughes in return rallied him on his misanthropy and seclusion.

"I had an idea that the cast of his mind was very similar to that of the great John Howe, with more of care, however, and correctness in his thoughts, and in the strength of his expressions. I could adduce proofs of their similarity in their modes of thinking, which would confirm the truth of this comparison.

"That he did not dwell more frequently and fully on doctrinal topics in his discourses and lectures, was owing, I think, to no want of devout attachment to the distinguishing features of the Gospel revelation, but, on the contrary, to the conviction that they were dwelt upon too exclusively by other preachers. This, at least, was the reason he once assigned to me for his comparative abstinence in relation to doctrines.

"It has been the wonder and regret of many that he did not employ his tongue and his pen more largely and frequently for the benefit of the public. This arose in a great measure from his fastidiousness in composition, and from an impression that the world would not take pains enough to understand him. He had fixed his standard of writing and preaching high, and as he found that he could not bring men up to his standard, he would not descend to theirs, and therefore he stood aloof.

"The character of Mr. Foster's mind has been referred to in his 'Life and Correspondence,' but a few traits of a more minute and familiar kind may be added as the result of personal observation, and as showing how he appeared to others in familiar intercourse. The compiler of his 'Life and Correspondence' has been sparing of remarks of the kind I here attempt.

"His appearance at once impressed you with the idea of a thoughtful and intelligent, but not a great man. There was nothing commanding or striking about him, at all resembling his celebrated contemporary, Robert Hall. But when earnestly

engaged in conversation with you his look was piercing. You soon found that you were in the presence of a master-mind—one who kept his mastery without the smallest effort on his part to display superior intelligence.

“He was remarkable for the ease and freedom of his conversational powers. His first object was to elicit from the person or persons with whom he was for the time associated the topics with which *they* were most familiar, and so to make them contributors to the discourse which followed. By this means they invariably felt at home with him, and received without any apparent effort pleasure and information.

“The discursiveness of his knowledge was surprising, and yet so little display was made of it that persons who saw him only once might suppose that the immediate subject of conversation was one which had long and exclusively engrossed his attention; while those who met him frequently were at a loss to tell which, of all the various topics that came before him, had received the most attention from him.

“His powers of sarcasm were prodigious, so that it was dangerous to provoke him by conceit or assumed knowledge. Yet, to those who would converse with him simply and unaffectedly, he was gentle as a child. In repartee he even excelled Mr. Hall, and had a great advantage over him in coolness. Perceiving this his advantage he modestly shunned engaging in controversial conflicts with Mr. Hall, though some injudicious friends would have urged them on to such conflicts.

“He would sometimes give expression to sarcasm not very politely. On being taken to see a place of worship for the Unitarians by their minister, a gentlemanly and erudite man, the minister remarked, as they walked away from the chapel-door down an avenue of poplar trees, that it was in contemplation to remove them. ‘By no means remove them,’ said Foster, ‘they are the only things *alive* about the place!’

“It cannot be concealed that he felt himself isolated, for the

severity of his strictures on certain ecclesiastical systems and forms of civil government, and his inability to mingle in any but rational or serious conversation, had greatly circumscribed his social circle. His residence away from the city also deprived him of that occasional contact with others, to which a contiguity to them would have introduced him. Certainly, his nature was not originally unsocial, and his philanthropy was great. He took pleasure in society where he could feel unembarrassed, and could be persuaded to associate with suitable company.

“He was very accessible under kind and liberal treatment, and when the parties who entertained him were of the same political sentiments with himself, and could relieve his mind from its incessant musings by lively discourse and witty sallies, he was quite at home and highly gratified. Then he would unbend and give utterance to sayings the most striking, though often bordering upon the ludicrous and extravagant.

“He frequently declared that he had no *verbal* memory. Probably his attention was too much engrossed by things themselves to pay any regard to the verbiage in which they appeared. This accounts for the rarity of quotations in his works, and the absence of all hackneyed phrases. Hence, too (as is also the case in Mr. Hall’s writings), he seldom cited poetry. The poetry of thought and imagination he had and employed, but he had no ear for rhyme.

“There was a pensiveness about him which pervaded also nearly the whole of his correspondence. He lived too much by himself, and too little with the playful and mirthful. Who, also, can doubt that his want of success as a preacher, and his habit of looking at books as a critic only, embittered his temper and cast a gloom over him, though he was naturally formed for friendship, and possessed of a mind fond of communicating its own thoughts and observations?

“He was a decided enemy to all ‘book-making,’ and uttered

fierce tirades against it in its worst forms: He denounced the publication of private letters by writers of memoirs; yet it may be asked, whether the pains he evidently took with the numerous letters which have appeared in print with his name, do not show a desire and design that they might form some memorial of him?

"Next to his abhorrence of unnecessary publication came his strong antipathy to public meetings held on behalf of the religious and benevolent societies of the day. He denounced the speeches as a species of public flattery and as causing artificial excitement, all unworthy of the smallest pretensions to rationality and religion. He reprobated exciting meetings as 'a kind of dram-drinking,' and then he would add, sarcastically, 'To be sure, you have taken from the people all their innocent recreations, and you *must* supply them with *amusement* of some kind.'

"His metaphors or similes, in the earlier periods of his preaching and writing, were perfect in their kind. His skill in constructing them may be traced to a habit of his mind in forming analogies from almost every object of sight or sense. At a later period, these ornaments of discourse were seldom introduced by him, and he seemed to be afraid of venturing upon one, lest it should not be perfectly correct. Mr. Hall called this a retributive judgment upon Foster for the severity with which he had criticised others, in his reviews of their writings.

"I paid a visit to him at Stapleton, on April 9th, 1836, (about five years after I had left Bristol,) and thanked him, sarcastically, for his biographical preface to Pascal's 'Thoughts,' which I knew he had been preparing for three years before I left Bristol, but which had not yet appeared. 'O yes, yes,' said he, 'it is getting on.' I obtained from him the notes of his sermon on 'Be not weary in well doing,' which he had delivered at the Baptist Chapel at Bath, two years before, with great effect. He afterwards preached the next yearly sermon, by way of supplement to the former, from the passage 'What do ye more than others?' This, however, did not succeed so well.

“ Though he (Mr. Foster) was not remarkable for a verbal memory, he had at command an ample assemblage of facts, supplied by his extensive reading. On one occasion he had been silent in a circle where there had been a long and unsatisfactory debate on mummies.* At length he came out with a few quiet interrogations, and the disputants soon found they had been exposing their shallowness to one who, as a person remarked, seemed as if he had made this topic the study of his life. In fact, his information respecting it was very extensive, and it would be hardly possible to express too strongly the degree of interest which he took in this class of antiquities. ‘*Ancient Egypt*,’ he remarks in one of his reviews, ‘surpasses every tract of the world (we know not that Palestine is an exception), in the power of fascinating a contemplative spirit.’ This was eminently the case with himself.

“ Mr. Foster indulged more in sarcasm than verbal wit. He once called the world ‘an untamed and untameable animal,’ and on being reminded † that he was part of it, and therefore had an interest in its welfare, rejoined, ‘Yes, Sir, a hair upon the tail.’ On insincerity, affectation, and cant, he was unsparingly sarcastic. Some years ago, the Emperor Alexander’s piety was a favourite theme at public meetings. A person who received the statements on this point with, as Foster thought, a far too easy faith, remarked to him, ‘that really the Emperor must be a very good man!’ ‘Yes, Sir,’ he replied gravely, but with a significant glance, ‘a *very* good man—very devout—no doubt he said grace before he swallowed Poland!’ ”

* After a lecture and the unrolling of a mummy at the Park-street Institution, Bristol.

† By my father, who used to narrate this and other conversations more at length. This paragraph and the preceding one were furnished by him to Miss Foster, and appeared in the “*Life and Correspondence of John Foster*.”

Continuing his memoranda of the sayings of Mr. Foster at various interviews, my father proceeds:—

“He urged the importance of being continually employed in collecting knowledge from books, and especially by observation, alluding to the practice of Hogarth, who in every company was engaged in noting likenesses upon his thumb-nail. He styled Coleridge the greatest thinker who ever thought, but yet as too subtle, and leaving you at a loss to tell whether the thought itself was new, or only his method of showing it.

“He reprobated Edward Irving’s style as being at variance with all propriety of language, and as like a vessel which would not float. It was a vehicle which would not carry him long in the region of literature. His adherence to it would ruin him. Indeed, he had already lost all hope of him. He might have expected that after the blaze and the smoke had passed away there would have been left a strong and pure fire. As to his fulsome dedication to Coleridge, when he said his soul should be bound up with his, the poet would discard it. Coleridge would say, ‘Noli me tangere! Adulate if you will, but no fellowship; revolve if you will, but no double stars.’ No, no, Coleridge would continue a solitary.

“I recollect far more striking passages in the works of Mr. Foster than in those of Mr. Hall. The former did not appear to me to addict himself much to the reading of the classics; but I have looked down from the coach-box, while on a journey with Mr. Hall, and have seen him perusing some Greek volume in the carriage behind me, without appearing to care for the notice of any one.

“I was struck with Mr. Foster’s habit of treasuring his thoughts and observations. In his critique upon Mr. Hall as a preacher, published after the death of the latter, I was surprised to read almost *verbatim* the remarks he had made, in conversation with myself and Dr. McAll at his own house, many years before.

“Both of them were believers in apparitions, and in stories founded upon them. Mr. Foster’s impatience of the limits of human knowledge respecting the other world, made him desirous to converse with some spiritual visitor, and of learning what such an one could disclose. When he was descending Snowdon, during a tour in North Wales, with his friend Mr. Stokes, of Worcester, he stopped and looked over down to a deep valley. When his friend came up with him he was leaning forward with evident abstraction of mind. ‘O, Sir,’ exclaimed Foster, ‘look down there; look down there, Sir; there’s a leap, Sir—one leap, Sir—a bold leap, and in one moment I should know the grand secret!’ His friend was terrified at his wild look, and humbly entreated him to draw back from the edge of the precipice, which Foster did with reluctance.” (The same friend mentioned the circumstance to my father).

“Mr. Foster had a firm belief in many stories of supernatural appearances, and he one day asked me if I doubted the reported facts of that nature, or disbelieved in the occurrence of such visitations. On my replying that I did, and that greatly, he exclaimed, ‘Why, Sir, what argument is conclusive against them? Did you never hear of a young man of extraordinary powers at Bristol, with whom Dr. Priestley corresponded, and that he had been supernaturally visited, though he had previously been altogether incredulous on the subject? Dr. Priestley wrote to this young man to know if the report were correct, adding that if he did not deny it, he should interpret his silence as an affirmative, and that in such case he should alter his own opinions on the subject.’ I could only rejoin that I still disbelieved.”

It was natural that comparisons should be instituted between Robert Hall and John Foster. Two such extraordinary men, brought together into one city, holding the same religious tenets, and being members of the same religious community, appeared by these facts to invite a particular comparison. While there

were features of similitude between them, there were also strong points of dissimilarity. Hall was as emphatically a preacher as Foster was a writer. Hall attracted a large share of general attention; Foster inspired a more restricted but a deeper sentiment of admiration. Hall invested every theme he treated with the splendour of his imagination, and the charm of his language. Foster selected a few topics, and bore them with him into the highest regions of thought. Hall gilded his thoughts with the fine gold of fancy; Foster beat out the solid gold into the thinnest leaf or the finest wire. "In beauty of diction," says my father, "in soundness of theology, and in bursts of eloquence, with an occasionally impassioned delivery, Hall was greatly Mr. Foster's superior. But in profundity of thought, excursiveness of imagination, and extent and variety of information, I think the palm must be given to Foster. The one fascinated you by his style of speaking and writing; the other set your own mental faculties to work, drawing you out by curiosity, and exercising your power of abstraction."

Mrs. Hannah More resided in Somersetshire at this time, and Mr. Leifchild paid her at least one visit, if not two visits. Of one, however, he has written the annexed notice:—

"In company with the Rev. John Clayton, I visited Mrs. Hannah More at Barley Wood, near Wrington, the birth-place of John Locke. She had recovered from a recent indisposition, and the clergyman of the parish was engaged in administering to her the sacrament. She afterwards informed us that he was a worldly man. At an early period, she had been intimate with Mr. Jay, of Bath, but had now become entirely 'churchified.' We saw miniatures of all kinds of clergymen, but not one of a dissenting minister, however eminent. She displayed the remains of much elegance in her countenance, her dress, and her whole appearance. Her conversation was good, and her demeanour affable; but we afterwards found that she spoke the same sentences to other visitors. We were free and open

in our address, and expressed surprise that *she* could countenance a clergyman, who, as she had just confessed, knew not the Gospel. Hereupon her companion invited us to look at the garden, which a male servant was sent to show us. He contrived to draw out all our thoughts respecting his mistress, and, as we were afterwards informed, these were repeated to her—for, we were told, it was her unhappy custom with all her servants to make them repeat all her visitors said of her. Thus she became their victim, and was ultimately obliged to break up her establishment, and to come and live and die at Clifton."

While referring to the persons distinguished for high mental powers, with whom my father became acquainted at Bristol, it will be as well to include the name of a friend, who indeed belonged as much to his London as to his Bristol years. It will, however, be convenient to comprehend a notice of this friend in the present portion of this volume. A partial anticipation of a future period will not confuse the reader when once informed of it.

Dr. Leifchild very highly esteemed his gifted and eloquent ministerial brother, the Rev. Dr. McAll, of Manchester, of whom he thus writes:—"I have been on terms of close intimacy with that splendid public speaker, and his letters to me, which I have preserved, breathe the most cordial affection. My wife was so pleased with his father, who came to visit his son for a few days while he was at our house in Bristol, and showed the old gentleman so much kindness and attention that she thereby greatly recommended herself to the son.

"In two instances I witnessed remarkable effects of his oratory. One was at a public meeting in Bristol, where the surpassing sublimity of his strain led some of the people to think they were listening to more than a mortal. The other was at Mansfield, on an occasion when I had mentioned the remark of a negress, who, being asked if she did not think it wonderful that God should give His only Son, for our redemption, to the shameful

death of the cross, replied, 'No, massa, not wonderful at all.' 'Not wonderful,' rejoined her minister; 'not wonderful! what do you mean?' 'No, massa, not wonderful at all; *it be just like Him!*'

"Upon my resuming my seat, Dr. McAll started up and exclaimed, 'Sir, have we lived and preached to this day to be taught by a poor negress? Yes, Sir, we have. Of all the observations I have heard on the love of God in giving His Son, this one seems to me the most apt and fruitful.' He then poured out a stream of eloquence upon this expression, and became so fervent that the chairman of the meeting rose and exclaimed in excitement, 'Sir, you must stop! Sir, you must stop!'

"Being once in the neighbourhood of Manchester, I received a letter from him conjuring me to pay him a visit. I found him in a feverish state, in consequence of the neglect of some of his leading people, and their unwillingness to join him in building a new chapel in a more eligible situation."

Dr. McAll preached for my father in Craven Chapel, London, on May 6th, 1834, a very elaborate sermon on Home Missions.

I am enabled, by the kindness of his son, the Rev. R. W. McAll, of Leicester, to annex his own views of the intercourse between my father and his; and also of my father, individually.

"I always felt there was an element far above the earthly in their regard, inwrought as it was with the sacredness of their common aim. Your father was one of those respecting whom mine most delighted to speak. Often, in my boyish days, I observed his kindling warmth at the mention of that cherished name. Perhaps you knew enough of my father's characteristic modes to understand how truly eloquent he would become at such times. His countenance shone while telling of a generous, expansive heart, and of single-minded devotion.

"Sometimes he would detail, with sparkling pleasure, little incidents of kindness connected with his occasional sojourns under his friend's roof; and when he did so, I remember that Mrs.

Leifchild fully shared in the affectionate eulogy. And the listener could not fail to be conscious that the most trivial circumstance was seen, by the speaker, in the light of its association with the Master. Even in early youth, I myself distinctly recognised in that admiration a kindling of heart towards the unseen and divine.

“ Vividly, also, I recollect the morning of a missionary breakfast in Manchester, not very long before my father’s death. Amidst the most impressive stillness, Dr. Leifchild spoke of personal consecration, especially in youth; referring to those whom parental prayers and tears had marked from infancy, many such being in the room. If my remembrance is accurate, he touchingly represented toil and death for Christ among strangers and barbarous people; thence pointing his appeal, with indescribable solemnity. I was but a boy, yet never can I forget how intensely my father was moved, and with what burning words he reiterated that appeal. No wonder that, from the combined utterances, my own heart was full. No wonder that I sought to bend my steps homeward, at the close, in silence, and an interval during which I might be alone with God. There might be, no doubt there was, great dissimilarity between the two men, in mental characteristics: their power lay in different directions. This, however, only rendered more resistless the evidenced breathing of the heavenly anointing from one mind and heart over the other.

“ As a preacher, also, my father would often refer to his loved friend, not in envy, but with a heart almost breaking through desire to be like him in that directness of fervent but manly persuasion with which he was so remarkably gifted; to be like him in those things which qualified him to be God’s instrument in finding the avenues to so many before alien hearts.

“ Your father ceased not to evidence love towards the son, for the sake of him who had gone before. He gave me abundant proofs that his was a heart so true as to assign to the dear

memory, and that which stood associated with it, no narrower a space than the familiar interchange itself had filled. Most readily, most effectually he served me. When he preached for me at Sunderland, eleven years ago, on the occasion of opening a new chapel, we recognised him as the survivor of an elder race, endued still with all his sanctified powers; and he left there, among strangers, the consciousness, remaining to this day, of having listened to the words of one himself very near to the Saviour he proclaimed. And when it was our privilege to have him with us in Leicester, on a similar occasion, in the year 1858, the venerable teacher spoke to us as from a mount of heavenly vision. He was evidently in waiting posture, ready to 'open' to his Lord 'immediately.'"

After so much that is serious, and exclusively associated with mental exercises, a brief notice of one of the summer excursions of the minister of Bridge-street Chapel may be accepted as a relaxation, and as an instance of simplicity of life.

During this brief vacation, we three made a voyage to Swansea, and from thence journeyed to the Mumbles, a then unfrequented village a few miles from Swansea, upon the coast. The jaded preacher wanted to be alone, and retired enough he was at the Mumbles. We had some difficulty in finding apartments, but more in finding food. All the mysteries of the *ménage* the husband left to his wife; but the wife, alas, was soon left without meat. The times were "out of joint," and so also, one day, were we. What was to be done?

My mother could not go out on a far forage, and I shall not forget the adventures which befel my father when we went in her stead. From house to house, and from cottage to cottage, we two wandered, with a melancholy prospect of being dinnerless. This was in one sense "a wild-geese chase," but not so in another, for not even a wild goose was to be seen. Neither flesh, fish, nor fowl could be secured. We tried for each successively, but, alas, the fish remained in the sea, the flesh in Swansea, and

the fowls in the farm-yard. The latter was obviously the most attainable of the three store-places, so on every farm-yard we cast a longing glance.

One thrifty farmer's wife was addressed by the preacher in his most persuasive tones, and she talked and understood enough English to comprehend an offer of English silver. Fowls she had, and more than enough. A bargain was hastily, too hastily, struck by my father for a couple of his own selection. The doomed couple stalked about, unconscious of their fate, and we disbursed the money, unconscious of ours. The greatest difficulty now arose. How were we to carry home the birds? The farmer's wife had sold them *alive*, and having delivered the feathered pair, retired to her cottage. Alive they were, alive we could not carry them, and nobody else would carry them. Despairing exclamations from the purchasers brought the wife again from her cottage, but with little relief to us. "What am I to do with them?" inquired the minister. "Twist their necks," replied the woman with a significant gesture.

I shall never forget my father's dismay. "Twist their necks!" exclaimed he, with horror on his countenance. Of all things this was exactly that which he could not do for any consideration. He turned appealingly to me, but I pleaded extreme youth, and consequent inexperience. There we stood, there fluttered the fowls, and dinnerless anticipations still saddened us.

At length the farmer's wife suggested what she thought to be a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. Re-entering her cottage, she returned with a chopper, pointed to a block of wood with cruel significance, and proffered the chopper to my father. The most critical case of conscience would not so completely have confounded him. At his proper work he could easily have despatched two heads of a sermon, but it was impossible for him to despatch two heads of poultry. He started back in horror at the bare suggestion, and the farmer's wife found herself compelled to become executioner.

She seemed to think it easier to chop off than twist, but in reality both operations are difficult to unpractised hands. As to chopping, the fowls would not stretch their necks, and we could not help to elongate them. At length, however, the woman became more expert and the fowls less vigorous. One pitiless grasp and blow decapitated one, and the same process subsequently decapitated the other.

So successful an execution was a great deliverance to us, and perhaps also to the fowls, if sensitive to the prolonged torture we might have inflicted upon them. Certainly, no beheading upon Tower-hill could have occasioned us greater pain at the time, and we returned to our lodgings with the headless fowls, thankful for food, and humbled under the conviction of our utter incapacity to perform plain decapitation.

We had also a serious as well as the above humorous adventure in connexion with this excursion, which my father himself shall relate:—

“I had a providential escape, which I record with gratitude to the Most High, exclaiming, ‘Thou hast held me by thy right hand.’ We had heard of a cave at some distance called ‘Bacon Hole,’ from the circumstance that the stones detached from the rock which composed it, when polished, resembled a piece of bacon. Myself, my son, and another friend, joined together for an excursion to this cave.

“We journeyed on horseback along the ridge of some high fields, until we reached the spot from which we had to descend to the cave. Here we alighted, and descending by a sloping ground, under the edge of which at the bottom the cave was said to lie, had to slide down as best we could, holding by the tufts of grass, and finding ourselves propelled by the increasing steepness faster and faster.

“At length, on looking beneath me, I saw the termination of the descent as it then first appeared, abrupt and precipitous, and below it, at a great depth, the foaming ocean. Towards that

I was slipping with uncontrollable speed. Horror seized me when I found myself unable to stop, or in any way to retard my descent. We were all, indeed, nearly in the same plight. How we stayed ourselves when near the edge, and how we got over it safely, and into the cave just beneath, I cannot tell.

"The dread of returning almost paralysed me, but having procured a fragment of the 'bacon stone,' we began our return, climbing with fear and trembling at every step. When we had reached the ridge from which we had at first descended, I sat still for a while to recover myself from my perturbation, and for the purpose of inwardly giving thanks to God.

"The block of stone, when polished, I long retained, and it did so closely resemble a piece of bacon or hung beef, that when I exhibited it in the evening to a man at Swansea who kept a provision shop, he himself was deceived for a minute, and was indignant, when I placed the specimen in his hands, to find it was merely a stone!"

I find a passage in my father's notes of this period, which I have some hesitation in introducing; but as it illustrates one of his favourite doctrines before alluded to, I may be excused for copying the reference to an incident in my own youth.

"My only son had attended the Grammar School at Collegegreen, where, though he was bitterly persecuted for being the son of a dissenter, he obtained most of the prizes. He was now brought exceedingly low in health, by what wore the appearance of a consumptive malady. I took him to various places for the recovery of his health, and obtained the best medical advice, but his appetite did not return, and his strength continually diminished.

"Having to go to Shaftesbury to preach, I took him with me, and stayed awhile at the house of my friend, the Rev. Thomas Evans, *whom we had nursed at our house at Kensington when afflicted with an ague.* I always found him grateful for this kindness, and my son now experienced the kindest treatment from

him. How often have I found a benevolent action recompensed even in this life, and in a manner that could never have been anticipated! There my son became gradually convalescent. Thus God had mercy upon him, and upon me, too, and his dear mother. It was a cause of thankfulness to us, and to all our friends."

We now approach an eventful period in my father's public history,—the most eventful and important one of all. He thus refers to it:—

"I had been six years at Bristol, and had occasionally preached at Craven Chapel in London during the summer months of the year. . When, however, I found they were seeking for a pastor to settle amongst them, I refused to go there again, unless it were fully understood that I was not *moveable*, and not a candidate for the vacant office. This was consented to, and I preached there again. To my surprise, upon my return from this last visit, I received a unanimous 'call' to become the minister of that chapel, together with a letter from Mr. Wilson (the founder, and in one sense the builder-up of that place of worship), entreating me to accept of it. The call was so unsought, and my acceptance of it was so powerfully urged upon me, that I felt it demanded my full consideration. I therefore laid it before my people at Bristol, with every letter I either received or wrote in reply. They were astounded, and some of them very indignant, at the suggestion of the possibility of my removal. They requested Mr. Robert Hall to remonstrate with me. He, however, was at least satisfied with the course I intended to pursue in deliberating, and the motives that actuated me.

"The people now offered to raise my salary, and to build me a new chapel wherever I wished it to be erected, but this had no influence over me. They had, indeed, always been generous towards me in their pecuniary arrangements—far beyond my experience at other places, and this, amongst other things, made me unwilling to leave them.

“For twelve months I continued undecided, watching events and the intimations of Providence. The friends at Craven Chapel still waited, respecting as they did the grounds of my hesitation. Mr. Wilson, indeed, became impatient, and was hurt at my reluctance to accept the invitation. Some of the friends, too, from Craven Chapel came down to visit me, and from them I learned that they were determined to have no one forced upon them, even upon trial, till I had given my final decision.

“At last, after fully balancing the arguments on both sides (he wrote them on a sheet of paper in parallel columns), I found the intimations for my removal preponderated; and fully believing it to be God’s will that I should accept this invitation, I resolved to obey that will, in the face of all the difficulties I foresaw I should have to encounter.

“But for the conviction that it was the will of God, how could I have broken through those attachments which bound me and mine to the spot? How sustaining is the conviction, when founded upon good grounds, that we are seeking to do God’s will rather than to follow our own?”

Great efforts in the way of remonstrance were made to retain him at Bristol. Folios of written reasons which were urged upon him by his people still remain in manuscript. One long letter particularises—(1) His general usefulness in the church; (2) his particular usefulness to the young; (3) the union and harmony then prevailing; (4) the cordial co-operation with him in all good works; (5) the increased activity which he had excited, not only in his own church, but in most others in Bristol. This was signed by about one hundred and fifty members of his church. Others remonstrated individually, and one good woman attributed his removal to the devices of Satan, proposing to call a meeting with a view of casting out the great enemy, and keeping their beloved minister.

On the subject of removals in general, this one led the minister to pen the following observations:—

"The removal of a minister from one place to another is a step in which the interests of many may be involved besides his own. Much will depend upon the originating cause. If it arise with himself rather than from some outward movement, in which he had no concern, he has great room to question its propriety. I have known some who had taken such a step unadvisedly, and have had reason to regret it all their days. They have been transplanted from a soil congenial to them, and in which they flourished, to a place of larger dimensions but uncongenial to them, and there they drooped and withered.

"But God may prepare a man in a lesser sphere for a larger one, and may direct him to it by such indications of His will as would make it sinful in him to refuse to obey, and to distrust God for the help that will be needed. There may also be unwillingness to be disturbed in our present ease and repose. Neither of my two principal changes was sought after, nor even desired by myself. Having employed the best means for informing myself of the divine will, I felt satisfied that even if I should make a mistake God would not condemn me, or fail to support me.

"In some respects, one or two such changes in a minister's life, after a residence of some years, may prove of great advantage. In the place which he is leaving he may have effected all the good for which he was fitted, and another may carry on the work to greater advantage. His own powers, too, may receive a new excitement from the change, and some quality may be drawn out which had remained under eclipse before. He can make alteration in his mode and habit of living, and many other little changes which he has found to be desirable, with much more ease, and with less observation by others, than he could have done in the place where his habits had been formed. But in all such cases the intimations of the divine will are to be carefully watched and obeyed. Nor will they be difficult to discern if such intimations be sought for. Christ holds the stars

in His hand, and is ready to determine its proper orbit for each of them. Well, therefore, may ministers sing—

‘Joined in one spirit to our Head,
Where *He* appoints we go;
And still in Jesus’ footsteps tread,
And do His will below.’”

CHAPTER V.

The London Period.

(FROM 1831 TO 1854.)

SECTION I.

IT was a serious thing to decide upon quitting Bristol, and a grievous act to take farewell. Old Park House, with all its quaint conveniences and quiet corners, must be left; and the terraced garden, the vine-clad passage, the roomy greenhouse, the old appurtenances and the carved mantel-pieces, must all be forsaken for some narrow-passaged, low-roofed and high-rented house in London. Ministerial motives were the only ones which swayed my father; but his wife might be allowed to cherish her local attachments, her household idols, and her female friendships. On the afternoon preceding our departure, my mother was overcome by the tears and lamentations of her assembled friends. She despaired as every one of them presaged woe and disappointment.

My father was looked upon as infatuated, and, indeed, some of his best friends were adverse to his removal. Robert Hall, John Foster, and William Jay, the three strongest-minded of his whole circle of advisers, disapproved of his going. Hall said, "What do you want, Sir? Your people love you, your chapel is full, the city respects you, your brethren love you. What on earth do you want, Sir? London! London! You'll be popular there for a year or two, and then neglected. Here, they'll cleave to

you to the last, and cherish your memory and your son after you are gone. In London, Sir, they'll soon forget you and yours." Mr. Foster spoke more briefly, but as strongly. Mr. Jay only joined in afar off; but shortly before his decease, he told me, in his own house, that he had thoroughly believed, at the time, that my father had made a fatal mistake in moving to London.

All this my father heard, yet hesitated not; all this my mother heard, and trembled. His farewell * sermon was from a very appropriate text, "None of these things move me;" and it was true of him to the letter: yet, from the first actual step towards London, disappointments did commence. It was no trifle, in those days, to move a ponderous library from Bristol to London, and the books, which went by water, bore vexatious marks of the mode of their conveyance. As to our three selves, we entered "the Company's Coach," and wept our way (two of us at least) out of Bristol, arriving, in cold, hunger, and discontent, at the White Horse-cellar, Piccadilly, on the 14th January, 1831. Even in his old age my father did not forget these disadvantages, and wrote:—"The expenses of parting with our house (at Bristol) and moving our goods were very great, and those of the alterations of a house which we took on lease in London proved enormous. The congregation at Craven Chapel had then been very much decreased through the variety and unattractiveness of the supplies."

Nevertheless, it was a lion-hearted man who faced all these discouragements, and even in their midst he could enter upon Craven Chapel as he had left Bridge-street Chapel, with "None of these things move me." Had they moved him, he would not have been the man for that onerous charge and serious responsibility. To all human appearance he had made a rash move, in

* Not in form but in reality a farewell sermon. He was too much affected to venture upon a formal public valediction.

his own mind he had made the right move, simply because he felt it to be divinely prompted. Certainly, Craven Chapel,* plain, square, and vastly capacious, with its four deeply-pewed galleries, and with its iron gallery again all round over these, did not look encouraging without a very large congregation. What might elsewhere appear a considerable company, would there seem but a scanty audience. Moreover, my father was a preacher who, beyond most others, manifested distress and impatience at a "thin congregation" in a spacious building. In such a case he was possessed of no compensative impulse. He had no mere mechanical defence against such discouragements. He could not rant, he had no Stentorian gift, he never did gesticulate wildly, and, in the absence of all these useful auxiliaries to vacancy, if a multitude should not fill the chapel, the new preacher would unhappily but inevitably degenerate into an ineffective and dispirited speaker. Well then was it for him that he was able to pen the following notes of the immediately succeeding state of affairs at his chapel:—

"The congregation soon increased, as also did the church. Deacons were chosen, one of whom, the late Mr. Summers, of Bond-street, was a shrewd and intelligent man, whose pew at the chapel was over the spot where his house had formerly stood in Carnaby-market. Another deacon was benevolent and generous, and thus needful help was afforded. But I had some trouble with a few Antinomian hearers. Yet, as I took no notice of their objections or their sentiments, and displayed indifference to them, the deacons, who had at first been alarmed at their expressions of dissatisfaction, themselves began to treat them with indifference, and so we gradually got rid of them. God blessed my labours abundantly, and I soon had much work upon my hands in con-

* It was built by Thomas Wilson, Esq., at an expense, including school-rooms below, of about £12,000. It would seat, when enlarged, eight or nine hundred persons on the ground-floor, and would accommodate, in all, about two thousand hearers.

versing with new converts, and in admitting new members into the church. Indeed, Mr. Stratten's prophecy, uttered a few years before, when forming the church of thirteen members, 'This little one shall become a thousand,' seemed likely to be literally realized in good time.

"On the 16th of May, 1831, I was publicly set apart to my pastorate at Craven Chapel by what are called 'Recognition Services.' While at Hoxton Academy, I had belonged to the church of Mr. Clayton, senior, at the Weigh-house Chapel. I therefore requested him to give the address to me as the pastor, which he did very affectionately, though he was then at an advanced age. My answers to the questions proposed to me were given at length, and the whole service was satisfactory, and numerously attended.* I was the first pastor of the church. When I had laboured about a twelvemonth in this place, a purse containing one hundred guineas was presented to me by the congregation, together with a silver tea-service for myself and family. The latter remained with me, and the inscription still shows the date of the donation. The guineas soon went their way.

"About this time I became greatly weakened in health, and even prostrated by a chronic disease of the liver, brought on by incessant study and fatigue in endeavouring to meet the increasing demands made upon me. Some friends at Bristol, hearing of this fact, wrote to me a letter of condolence, entreating me to return to them, and declaring that they would receive me with open arms, as I must now see that I had run from my true home, and that God was chastising me for this. I replied that I was

* In this recognition he had the good wishes of many of his brethren who could not attend. Dr. Pye Smith wrote:—"That this important event in your ministerial course may be followed by a rich dispensation of heavenly blessings, to the immortal benefit of many who shall be your joy and crown, is the sincere prayer of your attached and obliged brother in the Gospel,—
J. PYE SMITH."

so confident that I had followed only the leadings of Providence, that I would stay at my present post if I died for my determination.

“In the course of years I paid a short visit to Bristol, when those who had protested against my removal publicly retracted their protest, and avowed their conviction that the thing was of the Lord. But what a change had taken place there! Hall was gone; Thorp was dead; and a lull seemed to have settled upon the minds of the people.

“I now repaired to Margate to recruit my strength, but having been improperly treated with medicine, I was there so weak that I could hardly stand. I also found myself afflicted with a painful disease which demanded a surgical operation. This was skilfully performed by Mr. Chevalier in London, and I recovered and resumed my labours with increasing success. I record with great gratitude the peace and comfort of mind which I enjoyed during the whole of this trying season. When I returned to my pulpit I became, I know not how, so animated in preaching, and so vehement in the perorations of my discourses, as to raise apprehensions of injury to my lungs and to my powers of utterance.

“We had a choir of singers who sat behind me, occupying the two or three front seats of a large gallery. Most of these singers were members of the church, and Mrs. Leifchild took her place among them to countenance the choir. The service now became very attractive, at least as respects the singing, and crowds attended the chapel. Sometimes the effect of this singing was thrilling and even transporting.

“My brother and his numerous family of sons and daughters now became regular attendants upon my ministry; my wife and son and three sisters also attended; so that the Sabbath worship also included a family meeting. Many strangers who were sojourning in London, from various parts of the country, worshipped with us on the Sabbath, and often had to stand in the

aisles of the chapel. About two thousand persons were now commonly present at the evening service.

"I was at this time extensively called upon to preach in different parts of the country, at the opening of chapels, at anniversary services and at ordinations, as well as to preach missionary sermons, and to attend public meetings amongst not only my own connexion of Christians, but also amongst Methodists, Baptists, and Moravians. In this way I have traversed nearly the entire country, there being scarcely a town in it in which I have not officiated.

"Numerous as were my journeys, and abundant as were my labours, I was mercifully preserved from disqualifying accidents and disasters, though I had some very narrow escapes.

"On one journey, when leaving York, I had taken my place on the box-seat of the coach, named, I think, 'the Wellington.' We had only one other outside passenger on the top of the roof, and he was a Frenchman. We soon found the reason of the scantiness of outside passengers. Two rival coaches (of which ours was one) were racing to London at full speed. The winner hoped to distance its rival and drive it off the road. Along we flew, so swiftly that we could scarcely distinguish the hedges on either side, and the rocking of the coach nearly threw me off from my seat. The other coach was not far behind us, and we accomplished the first stage to Tadcaster, which was nine miles, in thirty-four minutes.

"Here I thought to quit the coach, but was prevented by the speedy changing of the horses, which only occupied two minutes. One of the leaders required to be shod at Sherborne, ten miles further on, and here the other coach passed us at full speed. Away we drove in a minute or two, but as we were going down hill one of the leaders dropped down dead. The wheel horse soon fell over him, and the coach was overturned against a dead wall on my opposite side. I contrived to jump off, and while the Frenchman was crying out 'Too queek, too

queek,' (too quick,) I was secretly praising God for my merciful escape.

"Slowly we travelled on all the night, and at the place where we stopped to breakfast it was found that the linch-pin had come out, and, the box over it being worn by the friction, was on the very point of falling off; so that had not our rate been slackened, we must have had a much more dreadful overturn. Thus God works by contrary events, saving from a greater accident by a lesser one. I should probably have been killed, but for the first disaster.

"In these different journeys I met with persons at several places who had apparently been benefited by my ministry—some of them many years before, when I was at Kensington, where they had been addressed by me at the boarding-schools at which they had been placed by their parents. I may well refer to these instances particularly. They are most satisfactory to a minister, and show that time has set its seal upon the reality of the professed change. They also serve to show how the benefit received extends itself to others—for many of these individuals had settled in life, and had brought up families of their own in the right way, besides establishing or promoting religious interests in their respective neighbourhoods."

Respecting the main material of his sermons at this period little need be said. What has been previously remarked on his preaching will nearly apply to it subsequently. Yet he was continually improving, which is more than saying that he was continually preaching. Ministers may preach without improving; this one, by his constitution of mind, must improve, or he could not preach. As he did not read his sermons, he re-made them, when, indeed, he employed any of his old ones as foundations for future re-edification. But, like all thinking men, he was evermore growing out of his old stock—he was evermore maturing in mind, mastering new subjects, ranging over new regions of thought, or expatiating with stronger wing in old regions. He

evermore learnt more of his own heart and the hearts of others. He read human life and the Scriptures with daily diligence, and therefore seldom dipped into the old deep sermon-drawers, or unfastened the old bundles.

The perorations of his sermons, however, demand special notice, as they certainly formed their most distinguishing features. In these, argument seemed no longer to drag its slow length along, but shone in fast and fiery lines. Logic, usually hard and severe, suddenly glowed in red heat, and the long-dead letter of Scripture became lustrous in the dark places of your heart. There was no escape for you in generalities. Down there, indeed, in the midst of the densely-seated multitude, no one knew or heeded you; or yonder up there, in the seven-pewed galleries, you were but one in a mountain of heads. But as you looked up to the pulpit, and listened to the impassioned speaker, you felt yourself individualised—singled out and insulated from the vast mass of your crowding neighbours. *You*, perhaps, were the impenitent person then being so severely denounced. *You* were the sinner then so pitilessly exposed. *You* were the man or woman who did that dark deed in years long gone by; and now you stand before the judgment-seat, to behold your vileness, to listen to your exposure, and to receive your doom. *Your* sin, your particular sin, has found you out, in this very chapel, at this very hour, and by the lips of that dauntless denouncer. *You* have trifled life away; you have laughed through the hours of a long but disregarded responsibility; and there you now stand face to face with the Judge of all—the Judge of both small and great!

As the impassioned preacher proceeds, the terrors of hell get hold upon you. A tremendous doom hangs sword-like over you. The fearful secrets of retributive wrath are now about to be disclosed to you. Smoke ascends from the bottomless pit; doleful wailings assail your affrighted ears. You are condemned to join in them, and yet you mutely acknowledge the justice of your condemnation. If you struggle to reply to the challenge of

insulted justice, your tongue cleaves to the roof of your mouth; or if you once more regain the power of utterance, it is but to call upon the rocks and the mountains to fall upon you. In vain! in vain! for the mountains are motionless—the rocks are deeply rooted as from the foundation of the world. In vain! in vain! for fiends are about to hurry you away—away! One moment's pause, only. Listen! After all, you are still in this world of trial; a few sands remain in the hour-glass of your life—a few—fewer—fewer! Flee, then, from the wrath to come! Flee now, this moment, lest it be your last—lest all those terrific possibilities, all those awful anticipations, become realized in your eternal perdition!

The only legible example of this kind of conclusion which comes before me in my father's handwriting is the following:—

“It is not difficult to anticipate and to realize what will be your condition, and what is coming upon you. What will be your end? The eye which is now looking at me will then be closing to open no more. That ear which is now listening to me will become incapable of receiving any sound that falls upon it, though it were the voice of thunder. Those arms will fall motionless, those heaving lungs be still, and the breath be gone. But the spirit—where will *that* be? Will angels have been commissioned to receive it? No; they have received no charge to that effect. Yours has not been one of the spirits to which they have been ministering attendants; not one with which they have been present at the last moment upon earth. After that last moment, when it sees them, with the new world breaking upon its view, and observes others mingling in their happy society, it will experience its dreadful loneliness. But it will be glad to be alone—a solitary wanderer through immensity for ever. Alone! Not so; it sees strange spirits who have tempted it to sin, and have kept it sinning until it can sin no more! With them it shall be linked for ever. Then you will recollect that this had been foretold. Then you will recollect this sermon,

this hour, when you were urged to escape, but neglected the great salvation !”

It would be possible, and far more agreeable, to represent the other kind of appeal, founded on the promises of pardon, the exceeding love of Christ, the parental tenderness of God, the ready influences of the Holy Spirit, and the joys of heaven. Here the preacher was exquisitely tender, persuasive, and pathetic. The tones of his voice, too, were far better attuned to these topics than to the terrors of the law. Therewith, also, came the burst of poetry or verse, which was a marked feature of my father's perorations. The charm did not dwell in the verse or the stanza recited; sometimes, indeed, it was but indifferent composition; but the speaker gave to it a force or a pathos which the composer might have envied and gratefully recognised. The truth is, the preacher had now no time to read poetry, and only recalled what he needed at the moment from his old stores and his early studies. The singular charm with which he invested antique scraps, (one, especially, from Giles Fletcher's "Christ's Victory,"*) and old hymns, demonstrated his thorough appreciation of the poetical. To read the verses afterwards was to learn how much they had been indebted to *him*—as much, perhaps, as to their author.

Much more might be said about the powerful perorations just alluded to, but no writer can enlarge upon these themes without diffusing the interest too widely, and thereby missing that character of concentrated power or pathos which distinguishes the successful perorator. Nothing seems to lose its aroma so swiftly after exposure to print as extemporaneous eloquence. When spoken it is almost everything—when printed it is almost nothing; and therefore it is that no man who did not hear Dr. Leifchild, and in his best days, too, can really form any proper esti-

* "Christ's Victory and Triumph in Heaven and Earth, over and after Death." Cambridge, 4to., 1610.

mate of his highest power. His printed sermons do not adequately represent it; the report of others appears to exaggerate it. "Had you but heard him speak it!" was the remark of one Greek orator respecting another, whose *written* oration was the subject of commendation. With equal justice may this be said of any printed discourses of such a preacher as Dr. Leifchild.

Oratory also resides partly in the audience; and the audiences to which Dr. Leifchild preached in London were not only most imposing in numbers, but most interested and interesting in aspect. Not so much curiosity as concentrated attention was depicted on every countenance. There was a rapid effluence of oratorical electricity constantly passing from preacher to people, and an equally rapid reciprocal influence passing from people to preacher. Take away this reciprocal influence; take away the people; reduce the effective sentences to the rigidity of type, or even diffuse their power through the medium of rumour, and it is no longer Dr. Leifchild speaking. The words, indeed, may be nearly the same; but the accompanying penetrative force and impression are entirely gone.

Thoroughly convinced as I am of this, I have not thought it advisable to quote largely from the perorations or other striking portions of my father's printed sermons. They were triumphs of the day or the hour—of the time and the place. Happily their effects, under divine favour, became permanent; and it is by these that the preacher must be measured. Whoever reflects upon the recorded results of his preaching (as stated in his own words and those of others), will naturally arrive at the conclusion that this man was indeed "the mighty power of God."

Respecting his doctrines little need be said here, because he himself said and wrote so much. Wherever he was known, his doctrinal views were as notorious as his name; and where he was not personally known, his published sermons proclaimed those views. He was simply but surely a moderate Calvinist. Brought up amongst Arminians, unknown to and unsolicited by

Calvinists, as a reader and reasoner for himself he had become one of their number. To avow this change in his sentiments was a bold step, for it cut him off from all his friends, and it opened a gulf between himself and his father. That good old Methodist could scarcely forgive his favourite son for disavowing his favourite creed, and alluded to it even in his ordinary letters. One of these begins with the offer of a clarionet, but soon proceeds from the clarionet to Calvinism. "There is something," says the old man, "in the Calvinists I cannot understand. I believe in general they are pious, hate sin, and love God; yet why stop short of the prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus, instead of going on from grace to grace, and glory to glory, till they enjoy all that the soul is capable of, and God is willing to give? . . . Perhaps you can by this time let me into this Calvinistic secret—to profess to love God but to a certain degree. Sure I am, the love of Christ demands my life, my all."

What the son then was he ever continued to be in respect of doctrine. Of certain preachers it has been said by some of their hearers that they could hardly state what doctrines their ministers believed. Never could this have been said of the one now under notice, for no hearer of Dr. Leifchild's for one or two Sabbaths could have remained in doubt of what he both believed and taught. He was as perspicuous in doctrine as he was pointed in exhortation. He always gave a clear and consistent explanation of the doctrinal texts from which he happened to preach; but though the hearer might not coincide with such views, the minister would not on that account alone exclude him from his church or his charity. The issue of all his religious teaching was this:—Believe confidently in Christ; believe or not in Calvin. If you believe in Calvin, you thereby show your good sense; if not, you do not lose your Christianity. Christ first—creeds afterwards.

He never avoided particular texts because they contained doctrinal difficulties, and he never evaded a difficulty when it lay in his text; yet he did not make the pulpit a professorial

chair, but rather a place of awakening. When he occupied the pulpit, it radiated heat as well as light. Encouragement and consolation came forth from it together with intellectual enlightenment and doctrinal disquisition.

To some topics he gave particular prominence, thinking that they did not always obtain it, or could not obtain too much. One of these was the necessity of the influence of the Holy Spirit, on which a short passage, from a sermon on Romans viii. 16, may here be introduced :—

“ We are here directed to that *divine* guidance, that inward conforming and moulding influence, by which we are brought into this new and heavenly relation. ‘As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.’ This leading of the Spirit is realized in the guidance of the thoughts and affections, according to the representations of the Gospel, but is distinct from the written word, and in effect superior to it. Those representations would of themselves be effectual, were it not for the aversion of the fallen mind, natural and acquired, to spiritual and holy things ; which obstruction can only be removed by the grace of the Holy Spirit operating on the mind itself, and bringing it into a receptive state. Under this inward leading, according to the outward teaching, the mind is cast into the mould of the Gospel, to receive its form and fashion. The divine Spirit is thus imbibed, and the divine favour thus received and enjoyed.”

Again, in another sermon, he observes :—“The presence of the Holy Spirit with the Christian ministry is the secret of its wonderful power over the human soul. It is present not merely by the influence of revealed truth, which, powerful as it is, enters not into minds unprepared to receive it, but by a deep and vital action upon the soul itself, by which it awakes out of sleep, arises from the dead, and becomes the partaker of a living light and a transforming energy. When this presence is not implored nor acknowledged, but on the contrary slighted, no ministry of the truth can be expected to have a converting power.”

A favourite and frequently-repeated hymn (No. 172 of the "Original Hymns" edited and published by him) was the following :—

"Eternal Spirit ! Lord of light !
Throned in the heaven of heavens above ;
Descend in thy renewing might,
Come in the glory of thy love.

"Here in this dark, disordered heart,
Be thy creative power displayed ;
Thine own undying life impart,
To nature's energies decayed.

"For thou canst bid the dead arise ;
And strong in all thy strength divine,
Armed with celestial energies,
Oh, what a glorious life were mine !

"How would high thoughts, in boldest flight,
From their inglorious bondage break—
The soul's deep music of delight,
At thy harmonious touch awake !

"Spirit of life, in love descend,
My dying spirit asks for thee ;
Breathe thou the life that cannot end,
Begin my immortality !"

In contrasting the manner in which Mr. Foster and my father viewed humanity in its present condition, I have shown how much more hopefully the latter regarded it than the former; and it may be here added, that hopeful views of the destinies of our race in the light of redemption, appeared to me to characterize most of my father's sermons. Though decided enough about man's depravity and criminality as a fallen being in the sight of God, yet he delighted to advert to "that original nobility of our nature which even mortal sin has not wholly obliterated; that soaring elasticity of spirit which neither ignorance nor misfortune can hopelessly depress; that mysterious confidence in the dawning of a life beyond the grave, of responsibility beyond the

judgments of this world, of an imperishable principle of existence, of which no power and no decay can deprive thinking man." *

These were the topics he loved to dwell upon and to expand. He approached with no satisfaction to the dread denunciations which sometimes sounded forth at the conclusion of his sermons. In these he was wonderfully powerful, but not at his ease. He felt profoundly while he preached of future punishment, and those who in private witnessed his after emotion and his temporary exhaustion, even to prostration, well understood that descriptions of the terrors of outer darkness affected himself quite as much as his hearers, if not far more. He felt like a faithful artist, bound to throw in the deep shadows of the scenery he undertook to delineate, though far more at home in introducing sunny fields, bright streams, and gladdening flowers.

Nothing more is requisite concerning the doctrines which this preacher held in common with his brethren of the same denomination, and reference may now be made to some personal characteristics of his preaching.

His aptitude in precisely meeting the mental state of many who composed his congregation, was a distinguishing feature of the practical and personal passages of his sermons. "Reserve all your strength and power," he was wont to advise, "for the application of your discourse. Persons who cannot appreciate the preceding parts of your sermons will understand and feel this." In this he himself was most at home, and went most directly home to the hearts of his hearers. Let a few instances, selected from several brought at various times under my notice, suffice to illustrate his power and aptitude of application.

One Sabbath evening a young man was present in one of the crowded pews at Craven Chapel. It was not the first time by many that he had been there, although it was the first time upon his return after a long absence. In the interval he had yielded

* From an article in a periodical by the author.

to his wild and wandering impulses, and visited, as he affirmed, half the world. During all his journeyings he never quite forgot the minister of Craven Chapel, nor the lessons there taught. As soon, therefore, as he found himself again in London, he again repaired to the place of worship where the unforgotten preacher was still in full power and usefulness. The text that night was some passage in the book of Daniel, and the returned hearer listened with attention, but not much emotion, until in the course of his application the preacher, with his accustomed spirit and solemnity, though totally unconscious of the peculiar pertinence of his words to one present, adopted the following strain:—"Is there not a young man here who has heard the truth in years that are past, but neglected it and wandered from home as well as from God? Is he not here again this night unchanged, though he has seen many changes—unaffected by God's preserving providence, untouched by God's unfailing mercy? Young man! Is this your case and condition? Is this your gratitude, your devotion, your penitence, your duty, after all? I charge you not to forget that God who has not forgotten you. You are here, this night, a monument of preserving mercy and abounding kindness." "That is all quite true, and exactly my case," said the hearer to himself; "and, Sir," exclaimed he, to the gentleman to whom he narrated the fact, "and, Sir, I nearly rose from my seat, for I was scarcely able to contain myself. The preacher had addressed me as if he had known my whole history. I retired to weep and pray, and at that time I was brought to God, and Dr. Leifchild was my father in Christ."

This now no longer *young* man was met with unexpectedly as the master of a school in London, and narrated the above circumstance to one of the visitors to the school, who had remarked that he attended upon the ministry of Dr. Leifchild. At the sound of that name the schoolmaster's eye kindled, and the above anecdote soon followed.

This preacher excelled in the delineation and vivid reproduction of Scripture characters. When he took as the subject of discourse some principal personage, whether an old Hebrew king, or leader of the people, or holy prophet, he verbally depicted the chosen man in strong lights ; or, if the selected personage were a female, he threw around her all those softer charms which might be appropriate to the particular character. One or two long-remembered sermons were upon Ruth and Naomi, in which he delineated their respective characters with a delicate and attractive grace.

On the other hand, he could bring out a bold leader or a stern and denouncing prophet with a masterly prominence ; as in the portraiture of Elijah. A sermon upon that noble prophet at Horeb, founded upon the question, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" was so well received upon its delivery, and so often referred to subsequently, that he included it amongst his "Abbreviated Discourses," of which it forms the eleventh. Though considerably abbreviated, it still retains some of those graphic delineations which marked the original and full sermon. Of these, one or two specimens may be here introduced. The prophet's arrival at Horeb and his entrance into the cavern are thus described :—

"Being miraculously strengthened for the forty days' journey, he arrives at length at Horeb, one of the peaks of Mount Sinai, and enters into the very cave, it is probable, in which Moses had been concealed, while Jehovah passed by and proclaimed His name. It was a spacious rocky cavern, situated in a wild, romantic, and desolate place. Kindred mountains reared their summits about on all sides, while, here and there, the tall majestic cedar lifted its magnificent head.

"Into this place Elijah entered, to seek by prayer and meditation the Great Giver of the law. While thus engaged, a voice is heard resounding through all the recesses of the cave, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?' He knows the voice, and answers at once as if speaking to the Almighty, 'I have been very jealous

for the Lord God of Hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only am left, and they seek to take away my life.' He is commanded by the same voice to proceed towards the mouth of the cave, and obeys. While standing there before the Lord, waiting for a further communication, he is alarmed by the sudden rising of a mighty tempest. A violent hurricane agitates and rends the place, followed by an earthquake. Fragments are torn off from the neighbouring rocks, the trunks and branches of the trees are shivered to pieces, and the cave in which Elijah had been found, as well as all the surrounding parts, reel awfully to and fro. At length the tempest subsides, and now Elijah sees the air to be filled with vivid flame. A sheet of lightning occupying the whole expanse appears before him, most brilliant, though at the same time most terrible to behold. The Lord, however, manifests himself in neither of these elements; they seem merely the messengers to prepare the way before Him, and to give notice of His approach, 'Who maketh His angels spirits (or winds), and His ministers a flame of fire!'

"But the wind and the fire at Horeb have passed away, and the air has fully recovered its former serenity. And now the softest and sweetest whispers float around Elijah, falling upon his ear in harmonious cadence, and diffusing through his soul a delightful stillness. It is not an angel, not a seraph speaking but God himself. The Lord is in the still small voice. The prophet's mind is now much more impressed than by any of the former appeals to his senses. He hides his face in his mantle, overpowered with his emotions. Who can tell his feelings at this moment? they must have been indescribable. Heaven itself is in a manner brought down to him upon earth. He feels like Paul, caught up to the third heaven. The Most High overshadows him with His presence. He stands in the orb of that Essence which gladdens

myriads of immortals. O favoured mountain! O memorable rock! Mine be the God of Elijah and of Paul—mine the feelings for ever which they possessed in their favoured moments!”

The preacher then proceeds to apply the question, “What doest thou here, Elijah?” to the various motives which might be attributed to the prophet in seeking the cave; and afterwards he pertinently transfers the question from the prophet to his own hearers, in several situations and circumstances of ordinary life, in which they might conceive it to be applicable to themselves. Take the following passages as proofs of this pertinence of application:—

“Would we walk peacefully, safely, and happily through life? Let us learn to say, in every place where God meets us with the inquiry, ‘What doest thou here?’ ‘No shrinking from difficulty, nor carnal love of ease, nor hankerings after worldly wealth, nor seeking great things for ourselves, have brought us hither, but the leadings of thy providence. We have not made the way for ourselves, but seen it opening before us, and in following it, have, in the assurance of our own conscience, been hearkening to thy voice. Let those who act otherwise expect otherwise—expect to be rebuked. The troubles of most men’s lives are owing to the preponderance of the counsels of flesh and blood in their movements. The permissive will of Providence never suffers us to counteract His revealed will with impunity. It was a mercy to Elijah, to be made to retrace his steps by so mild an expostulation; but the ill-fated Balaam persisting in his mad purpose, notwithstanding the remonstrance of the beast, and the armed appearance of the angel, never recovered the right path, but was led on to his ruin.

“Anticipate this question, in *all scenes and places of folly and danger, which you may be tempted to visit*, in order to be prevented by it from approaching them. By the agitations it would cause you, and the self-reproach with which, as a professing Christian,

it would overwhelm you, in any of the purlieus of vice, or haunts of dissipation; in the gay and frothy circle, at the card-table, the tavern, the theatre, the musical entertainment; be induced to avoid them. We can be safe in no place where this question would convict us, as avowed servants of God, of inconsistency and impropriety. If we would be delivered from evil, we must not be led into temptation. The moth is safe only by keeping out of the sphere of the scorching flame. Satan has gained the first advantage over us, when he has brought us within the precincts of vanity and sensuality; another and greater is almost sure to follow."

In a number of like circumstances he continues to suppose this question addressed to various classes of his hearers; and so well-devised were these supposed conditions, that they included nearly all present. As a proof of this it may be added, that for some time afterwards persons referred to and applied the question to their positions when conversing with my father; and even a year or two later, he was one day accosted in a public vehicle by a stranger, who said, "Ah, Sir! do you remember 'What doest thou here, Elijah?'" "Do you?" rejoined my father. "Indeed I do," added the stranger, "and shall never forget the sermon. I have often since asked myself the question, and have often had to condemn myself for the position in which I was placed at the time."

As usual, the preacher became impassioned at the conclusion of the discourse, employing his text as the basis of an exhortation to usefulness, in these words:—"It was the custom of the Romans at their funerals, that, whilst the herald went before the deceased to proclaim his virtues, any one whom the departed citizen had rescued from captivity, or saved from death, should take his station in the train that followed, as chief mourner, having the greatest cause to value him. Shall we be content, as Christians, to be carried to our graves without having *one* among our survivors who shall have cause to value us far more as the

instrument of deliverance from a spiritual, hellish thralldom, and from the horrors of an eternal death? Where is our zeal? where is the sounding of our bowels over the myriads around walking in darkness, and towards the pit of destruction? See how it yawns! how, ever and anon, they are disappearing, having fallen into it! Amongst the cries now uttered by them, are there none against *us* for neglecting to stay them in their mad course; or attempting it only with a feeble voice, and a timid, gentle hand? Lord, save us from such deserved reproaches! Quicken us to active efforts for the rescue and welfare of the immortals with whom we are encompassed! Infuse a portion of thine own Spirit of burning zeal and yearning charity into us! Let us not be able to keep silence; to hide from ourselves men's misery and crime, and the destruction that is at their doors. Awake our slumbering zeal! Awake, not to purpose merely, but to action!

"Is it so aroused? Now, indeed, we *live*; we live to noble purposes; refreshing cordials are preparing for our spirits, in the results of well-directed efforts, and the success (in a measure at least) with which, sooner or later, they shall be crowned. Eternity—O, with what delightful prospects does it open to us! We pass through hosts of tame, and comparatively useless saints, towards the ranks of prophets, apostles, reformers, ministers and labourers of various kinds in the Lord's vineyard, amongst whom our station is appointed, and in whose distinctive honours and felicities we shall be permitted to share. 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"

In all his sermons of this kind he was careful to enforce abundant practical lessons, and to press home numerous personal applications from the main subject. The personage portrayed was not merely introduced to show his artistic skill or his discriminating subtlety. To analyse the character was one

thing, to apply its analysis was another, and, in the preacher's opinion, of far superior importance. He felt that he was not merely an exhibitor but an instructor, and an exhibitor only in order that he might the better become an instructor. He painted the portrait that he might hold it up, not for mere admiration, but for imitation. He analysed the character that others might profit by its good points, and shun its faults. He painted not for the seclusion of the connoisseur's gallery, but for familiar observation in the parlour of the ordinary house.

The portraiture of the character selected was always completed before he advanced to the lessons of admonition or imitation which it suggested. He avoided pointing attention to separate features during its progress ; he would suggest no moral until he had fully told the tale. By this means he escaped the destruction of all effect through breaking up the narrative into parts, and attaching a lesson to each part successively. He instinctively discerned the best method of presenting such studies to the public ear ; and always, as I remember, produced a considerable impression by his vivid portraiture, and by bringing that first to an effective finish, so that when he had laid on the last colours, and put in the last touches, any hearer might measure the success of the descriptive artist by the suddenly relaxed attention and relieved attitudes of the great congregation. *He* then terminated his efforts as an artist, and his hearers recognised his skill in attracting and retaining their undivided attention.

At this division of his discourse he would pause for a moment or two, and then proceed to the practical inferences. There he knew that he was at a disadvantage in being upon a dead level, where, unless he could add interest of another kind, tameness and inattention would be the result. Hence his anxiety to put the needful inferences and practical deductions in the most palpable and widely intelligible form. In preparing this portion he frequently, as he said to me, called to mind the observation of an aged woman, to whom had been presented a copy of Mr.

Scott's edition of Bunyan's "*Pilgrim's Progress*," enriched with notes explanatory of the allegory and its supposed obscurities, for the benefit of the poor and imperfectly educated. Upon being asked how she relished, and whether she understood the book, she replied that she at once understood the "*Pilgrim's Progress*," and hoped soon to be able to understand the "Notes." Admonished by this incident, and knowing that the reproduction of the scriptural narrative would be the most attractive and generally intelligible portion of his discourse, the preacher took care that his equivalent to Mr. Scott's explanatory notes should not be less acceptable than the narrative. He was sure every one would gladly look at the picture; he was not so sure that every one would as gladly listen to its moral.

It would demand too many details to follow the preacher into the several subjects which he selected, and the effective methods with which he treated them. It is enough to repeat, that most powerful applications and profound impressions were often made in those days, and that the large assemblies who at that time frequented Craven Chapel were as breathless as they were numerous in the moments of highest effort upon the part of the preacher. It is not within the reach of ordinary terms to describe the impression sometimes made. One record by my father has a reference to such an impressive occasion:—

"I was once preaching at Craven Chapel upon the subject of 'Importunity in Prayer,' from the narrative of Jacob wrestling with the angel. As I went on, I warmed with my subject, and became impassioned towards the close. I really felt as if God were only waiting for the people to strive with Him in prayer for a blessing to bestow it upon them. I felt that they might at that time have it, and Charles Wesley's hymn on 'Wrestling Jacob' came to my recollection. The peculiar character of his poetry, that of aggravating a thought and working it up to a climax, is most evident in that fine composition. I then repeated with great earnestness parts of it, and these lines with emphasis:—

'I never will let go my hold—
Be conquered by my instant prayer,
Tell me thy name, and tell me *now* !'

I now perceived an unusual emotion in the large assembly. It extended and deepened itself by sympathy. A vast number of people seemed to me to be upon the point of rising and responding to me. I felt sure that I had but to proceed in the same strain, and they *would* rise. Here was a temptation, but it occurred to me, what a condition we should be in if I were not able to quell the excitement after they had risen. I feared it might advance to extravagance. This, too, was the time when Mr. Irving's devotees were vociferating in strange tongues, not very far from us (in Newman-street, Oxford-street), and disgracing themselves by enthusiastic outbursts, with which I feared any excitement amongst us would be confounded.

"On the other hand I thought, if this were a work of God, I might offend Him, and retard it by my timidity. All this passed through my mind instantaneously; and while I paused for a moment or two, I inwardly invoked God's influence and direction, and I then determined to proceed in a dispassionate strain, and thereby I calmed the minds of the people.

"I have never yet been able to determine whether I did right. But my brother, who was then attending upon my ministry, came into the vestry after this sermon, and declared that he had been in such agitation, between a strong impulse to rise up and speak aloud, and his sense of decency and order, that he would on no account voluntarily suffer such excitement again, but would rather go out of the chapel."

One prominent characteristic of this preaching was its stimulative and quickening power for Christian work. Instructive and informing as it was in relation to many sermonic topics, the issue of all was to infuse a spirit of unwonted and unceasing activity into all willing hearers. He would have a congregation distinguished by its zeal, energy, and liberality. Works were

viewed rigidly in subordination to faith, but works must be seen, and the hand must be regarded as the index of the heart. Christian activity was in his teaching the salt of Christian life. The littleness and trifling of little minds was to be met by continued work. Gossip, tale-bearing, idle talk, and party spirit were to be remedied by prompt and harmonious action, which thus secured indirect as well as immediate advantages. Himself deeply imbued with zeal, and possessed with a quenchless spirit of activity, he communicated of the same to his hearers, in greater or less degrees. Hence arose fourteen several Societies, which he himself established at Craven Chapel, and each of which had a peculiar province of benevolence or blessing. To preside over and sustain these numerous Societies made large and endless demands upon his own time and that of his wife. For several years they had scarcely an entire evening at their own hearth, so indispensable was their presence at the meeting of one Society or another.

As Burke observed in a letter to Pitt:—"A total neglect of a man's private affairs is the inevitable consequence of occupations that engross the whole man;" and this minister was so engrossed by claims of his own making, that how he contrived to meet them all, to meet personal claims, and to preach, as often and as powerfully as he preached, was wonderful. How he was able to provide sentiment for all hearts on the Sundays, and work for all hands on other days—to keep his own best thoughts in constant command, and to command the co-operation of others, and the attention of a vast congregation in the very centre of the West-end of London, not a little surprised those who knew him, and even one who lived with him. He dedicated body, soul, and spirit to his varied work, and his self-sacrifice was a holocaust.

Of the fourteen active Societies he was wont to say, "They are of the greatest importance to the chapel. They will probably last far beyond my day, and when my pulpit power is gone they will remain. They will keep the people together, and

perhaps prevent separations and dissensions when I am no more." He lived long enough to witness the truth of part of his prediction, long enough to see these associations for benevolence and blessing pass into other hands, and to receive with deep satisfaction a new edition of what was always to him a most-welcome annual—the little book of "Societies in connexion with Craven Chapel." This simple record of names and deeds was a book of sermons reduced to practice. It was the people's practice in response to the minister's preaching.

Numerous testimonies might be adduced on the effect of his preaching in his days of full power; two or three of which may suffice. The Rev. Robert Forsaith, now the minister of Orange-street Chapel, near Leicester-square, the very sanctuary in which my father so often and so long ago preached, thus testifies to the powerful influence of Dr. Leifchild's ministry upon himself:—

"I shall ever have cause to bless God that it was my privilege to come within the circle of his influence, for though my first religious impressions were received under my beloved father's ministry, yet I am mainly indebted to *your* father for all I am, both as a Christian and as a minister. I have heard many of the most distinguished preachers of the present and of the past generation, but no man on earth ever exercised so potent an influence over me as he did. How often have I longed for those Sabbaths to come over again, when as a hearer I mingled with that vast crowd at Craven Chapel, and we were kept spell-bound by the hour together, as we listened to those marvellous discourses, so replete with wisdom, beauty and pathos, and ending with those mighty bursts of eloquence, and those powerful appeals that stirred our souls to their lowest depths, and moved us even as the strong wind moves the trees of the forest! Ah! those were days of heaven upon earth!

"It was your dear father, who, under God, led me to consecrate myself to the service of the Redeemer, to connect myself with the people of His choice, and afterwards to enter on the

work of the Christian ministry. Blessed be God for all the prayers he offered up on my behalf, and for all the wise counsels I have received from his lips—lips now sealed in death—counsels which have proved of vast service to me during the five-and-twenty years I have laboured for Christ and the Gospel!”

The Rev. J. B. Brown, minister of Claylands Chapel, Kennington, has borne high and grateful testimony to the effect of Dr. Leifchild's preaching, in the following terms:—

“He was essentially the preacher: the preacher's work was the joy, the preacher's power was the glory of his manhood. There in the pulpit flashed out all the fire of his nature. His word clothed itself with its most energetic force; his voice put on its most pathetic tones; his spirit displayed its most royal power when he was pleading for Christ with the souls of men.

“I recall his thoughts and his words, and I try to discern the secret of the spells which, when I was young, his eloquence as a preacher cast upon me. It seemed to thrill through my nerves, and tingle in the very marrow of my bones. He kindled to a flame that desire for the work of the ministry with which my boyhood's thoughts had been haunted; and I ask myself where was the power? It was himself! It was the man, the very soul of manliness, the very soul of godliness projected into his ministry. It was the spirit that emphasized every word, emanated in every look and gesture, and charged every sentence when his soul was up with its own intense vitality.”

Alluding to the peroration of his discourses, Mr. Brown continues:—

“He would throw off that quiet didactic demeanour, and every nerve, fibre, organ, would glow instinct with life. Then wave after wave of fiery eloquence would flow forth, and flood the soul of the astonished hearer in an atmosphere of flame. I have sat burning and glowing under his words. He would paint in the most intense and vivid language the tremendous

issues which were hanging upon his appeals—the joys, the bliss of the saints in glory; the glory of the Saviour when He should come to judgment; the joy of the redeemed, the horror of the lost; the worth of a soul which must live for ever in bliss or agony; the anguish of the remembrance, ‘Too late! too late!’ in the abode of eternal pain. I have heard him pour forth his warnings, and appeals, and denunciations, till the congregation sat as paralyzed, till men held their breath, and women sobbed in the intensity of their excitement; and then, with one brief sentence, which in force and fire surpassed them all, he would pause, and amidst a breathless silence, with an emphatic nod, his acted Amen, sit down. The hymn was carefully selected to carry on the impression. The singing of that last hymn at Craven Chapel, on some occasions, was a thing to be remembered through life. The prayer, brief, intense, importunate, and then the congregation broke up; but how many went home to pray, to agonize night-long, God only knows.”

An American clergyman thus describes what he heard from this preacher:—“A few moments before the conclusion he addressed an appeal to the unconverted with an earnestness and pathos and solemnity that must have thrilled every heart. It seemed to me as though he had drawn a circle around his assembled flock, and that beneath the heart-searching admonition which he addressed to them, not one could pass that circle until he had fully resolved to live from that moment for God and eternity.”*

These are illustrations of the effect of Dr. Leifchild’s preaching upon educated and receptive minds, but an equally deep impression was made by it even upon ordinary minds; and it is remarkable that it remains with those who remain to this day. In proof of this I may adduce the substance of some observations made to me on the day upon which I record them.

* *Glimpses of the Old World*, by the Rev. J. A. Clark. 1840.

Happening to enter the shop of an old hearer at Craven Chapel, he proceeded in the following strain, and nearly in the following words:—

“I never heard any preacher who rivetted things in my memory like the Doctor. I can remember sermons I heard from him twenty years ago, and I can even recollect the first sermon I heard from him in his early time at Craven Chapel. Indeed, I can recollect many things as well or better now than when I heard them first. *Then* I used to go over the whole sermon as we walked home, *now* I only go over those parts I liked best. Sometimes to this day I meet with an old Craven friend who goes over the old sermons with me.

“I can tell you how the Doctor began one of his sermons twenty or more years ago (detailing the commencement), and there were many others I shall never forget. Why, Sir, your father used to make the very walls echo again—yes, and echo with truth—no flash there—only good sound truth. I always say that he did as much good as any one man since the apostles. Indeed, I used to think he was an apostle. You, perhaps, did not know Mrs. S——, but I remember her saying to me, when the Doctor preached his last sermon at Craven Chapel, ‘Do they call *that* getting old? I should like to hear any young man preach such a sermon as that.’ Ah, that was a sermon—those were my days for hearing. I’ll tell you what, Sir, the Doctor spoiled me, and some others too, for hearing.”

That the impressions made were indelible could be substantiated by numerous proofs, and by some out of the range of this preacher’s regular hearers. The editor-in-chief of a daily London journal, in a note addressed to me, states that he even now distinctly remembers a sermon he heard in his childhood from my father; and a middle-aged gentleman assures me that he well remembers hearing in his boyhood one of my father’s discourses. Still more remarkable is the recent instance of a physician, who, on hearing my name announced in a friend’s

house, came in to tell me that he distinctly remembered hearing my father preach at Orange-street Chapel (which must now be more than forty years ago) in his early days. The text was, "And after death the Judgment." "That sermon, Sir," exclaimed the physician, "I have never forgotten, and never shall. O that I had profited more by it! I never knew your father personally, but I used sometimes to send him a guinea for charities. He was by far the most impressive preacher at Orange-street Chapel."

After this account of his preaching, it will be interesting to peruse the minister's own account of his habits of study, and his mode of preparing his sermons:—

"With regard to the manner of composing my sermons, I began, while amongst the Methodists, with carefully written discourses, which were committed to memory, and in which many imitations of Saurin's impassioned language were employed with great effect. I continued the same plan at Hoxton, and while there preached with general acceptance, certainly much more frequently than any of the other students.

"When I accepted the invitation to Hornton-street Chapel, Kensington, I continued the same habits, and I found my memory, which was naturally very good, considerably improved by use. Then, however, I thought, after I had gone through my little stock, that I had exhausted all pulpit subjects, and that I should never hold out to the end of life. One sermon would then cost me two or three days to prepare and commit to memory. But subjects gradually multiplied, and composition became easier. My hearers also increased, and some were very intelligent. This had a good effect in making me attentive and studious. I had derived great advantage from Mr. True's lectures on elocution at Hoxton, and am convinced that much impression in the pulpit is lost from want of proper instruction in that art.

"My frequent practice at this period was to prepare my sermons only *mentally* at first, then to deliver them, and to write

them out on the Monday mornings. This practice made the manuscript read well, but the labour was very great.

"I had great facility in discharging my sermons from my memory after their delivery, which was a great advantage. While at Kensington, I used to repeat my sermons in the shady walks of Kensington Gardens, particularly near the Palace; and afterwards, while at Bristol, in the Old Park and Tindall's Park." (In the latter place he was overlooked, and several years afterwards, when on a visit to Clifton, an old gentleman pointed out to me from his windows the part where he used to watch my father gesticulating.)

"An unhappy propensity to postpone preparation until I was, or fancied myself to be, in the right mind, led me to defer it until the Saturday. This marred my composure, and disturbed my sleep on the Saturday night. I was often fearfully anxious in the hours of darkness, and my memory was overcharged.

"I have accustomed myself to extemporise on inferior occasions, but for the pulpit I have become so habituated to a careful compacting of the sermon in my mind, that from the power of association I feel now, in my advancing age, that any attempt at a different mode would be a failure. Laborious and unceasing sermonizing through life has restrained me from the extensive reading I should otherwise have enjoyed, and likewise from amassing a greater variety of useful knowledge.

"I have tried expository discourses, and have gone through courses of sermons upon the miracles, the parables, the prophecies, the apostle's creed, the apostolic epistles, and the characters in the Old and New Testaments. I have also delivered a series of discourses on the Apocalypse.* So far as mere curiosity is concerned, I have always found, respecting

* These excited great interest at the time, and I well remember how densely thronged Craven Chapel was, even to the upper iron gallery, on the Sunday evenings during their delivery.

courses of sermons of the above kind, that the crowds attracted at their commencement were with difficulty retained to their close.

“I have been fond of ‘old divinity,’ and have made a collection, during many years, of the best writers of the old school. Their quaintness, perhaps, infected my style, but it gave point, and, above all, many happy elucidations of Scripture, in which the old writers excelled, and which I have always found to interest and edify good people. I have retained nearly the same views of divine truth as those with which I started, steering equally clear of High Calvinism and Low Arminianism.

“At Bristol, and more especially at Craven Chapel, my perorations have been highly animated and perhaps declamatory. I often found that they had been useful in awakening men’s minds out of lethargy. Yet now, when nearly seventy years of age, I should be frightened, even if I could make such bold, vehement and startling appeals.

“I never used notes of any kind, and never *read* a sermon in the pulpit but once, when the congregation were so annoyed at my lifelessness that I gave up the practice for ever. Yet the fact of not reading has deprived me of the use of the same sermons on such public occasions as anniversaries, openings of chapels, and ordinations of ministers, while I have seen other ministers easily availing themselves of their old stores.

“My old sermons have always been either revised or newly elaborated on every fresh occasion of their partial re-delivery. Greater interest has been thus given to them, but hardly enough to repay the requisite additional mental exertion. They who survive me will find hundreds of sermons fully written out, but, I fear, difficult to decipher. From these, however, it will appear that I have not been idle, nor served the Lord with that which cost me nought.

“I am convinced I have done myself great injustice in some places from not having had time to be careful in preparation and

therefore at ease in delivery. But oh! the number of excellences requisite to make a *good preacher*! Still, with all its difficulties, and its incessant demands upon the vigour both of the mind and body, my work has been my delight. God be praised that it has been so!

“I have spoken of preparing my sermons *mentally*; I thus laid them up in my mind, paragraph after paragraph. Having to preach twice on the Sabbath, I generally prepared the evening sermon on the Friday, and then left it upon the tablet of memory. I prepared my morning sermon on the Saturday, and then, as it were, laid it upon the former without disturbance or confusion. The morning discourse being last laid on came off easily as being the uppermost in my mind. In the afternoon I revived again the one first prepared and was ready with it in the evening, free from all confounding remembrance of the morning’s sermon.

“I found that from habits of the above kind I could prepare a sermon while walking or riding, or on a journey, and I have thus elaborated many of them. I did the like also with most of my speeches and addresses at public meetings and occasional services.

“Latterly, all my fears and misgivings were in the preparation, which, when completed, was so sufficient that I was free from all anxiety on this account in the pulpit, and was able to join in the worshipping service of the congregation without exhibiting any restlessness or haste to begin. I had no trepidation lest I should not hold out to the end. Thus the labour with me was always beforehand, and preaching itself was pleasant and profitable to my own mind.

“For many years I accustomed myself to begin my sermons in a low tone of voice, partly with a view of securing the attention of my hearers and a suppression of noise and coughing, and partly also to gather up my own thoughts, and to get the people in time into harmony with them. I reserved myself for the

greatest use of my voice and for the utmost animation till the last. To embody this plan in a precept for remembrance, I thus quaintly expressed it:—

Begin low,
Proceed slow,
Take fire,
Rise higher;
Be self-possess'd,
When most impress'd.

“I have found devotional poetry, much of which I had learnt in early life, to be very useful to me. It would often suggest itself to me in the pulpit by some remark I was then making, and would come forth spontaneously. If I failed in a word or a line, I could always make up the failure of memory from my own mind, when excited. Charles Wesley's hymns and poems were most frequently quoted by me, to which I added many pieces of blank verse from Milton, Young, and Cowper. Towards the close of my ministry I was more sparing in the use of poetry, as well as more even in my voice through the discourse.

“I have seldom had to complain of any want of attention on the part of my auditors, and I have often carried them along with me in bursts of feeling. I have invariably found that if you preach to people in an expostulatory, persuasive, and pathetic manner, looking them in the face, and evincing no desire to be admired or wondered at, you will never fail to get a hold upon them. Ministers have only (with the help of God) to carry on the interest which a man excites in company by an earnest discourse, to a higher style, and to a greater degree in the most important subjects, to secure a similar or more marked attention.

“My preaching has been always textual. There is an individuality in Scripture passages which can be discerned and brought out by close attention, and by which attention I have been enabled to preserve considerable variety in an extended and regular ministry.

"I would repeat, that my memory has never once failed me; nor has it ever left me at fault, for a long course of years, as to what I had previously prepared for delivery.

"From the first I determined to be a *good preacher*, and I have never seriously aimed at anything else all my life. A good writer, or speechifier, or lecturer, I might occasionally have wished to be; but I never suffered attempts of this kind to interfere with my great business and object—preaching. I early read all I could find upon this subject, as 'Claude's Essay on the Composition of a Sermon,' and I heard various preachers with a view to ascertain their modes of influencing their hearers.

"I have always thought it advisable to make my introductions short, and my divisions simple. Of late years I have thought it best not to give out the divisions or heads of my sermons beforehand, as I once did, and as some ministers still do. Such announcements forestal curiosity, and sometimes make our hearers impatient when they begin to reflect how much has yet to come. I have also latterly shortened my sermons, as well as what is called 'the long prayer,' which, indeed, for many years, I have made much briefer than ordinary, never allowing it to exceed ten or twelve minutes. I have also endeavoured to dispose striking thoughts in different parts of the sermon, in order to sustain the attention. I have not employed much illustration, though I have admitted pertinent anecdotes. What I strenuously laboured to avoid was *monotony*, that bane of all impression. The speaker's tone at the end of his sentences should be varied, and the pitch or key of the voice should be varied in different parts of his discourse. The less there is of gesticulation the better, in my opinion. Better than this is a direct look at the people, which secures their attention.

"I would urge on young ministers that pathos should be cultivated. We may be too drily intellectual, and this arises from the artificial character of our style, words, and method of

discourse. The arrangement is often too elaborate, and the memory is put to too severe a task. Hence people are not looked at; not directly, feelingly, personally addressed. Can you wonder that they are not interested? In one word, transfuse your heart into your sermon, and familiarise yourself well with it before you go into the pulpit. This will give a propriety to your manner not to be obtained by any mere directions.

“Have the substance of your sermons for the ensuing Sabbath well in your mind *before* the Saturday. Reviewing them and going over them, after a day’s intervention, will allow the judgment to have cooled on some points, and to be capable of correcting others. This will also promote the more spirited delivery of the sermons by the omission of those lengthy details which are unavoidable in the first elaboration of the thoughts in their entire series, but which are not necessary for your hearers.”

The biographers of ministers are apt to merge the congregation in the minister, unmindful that the congregation, especially amongst Dissenters, is the measure and mirror of the minister. Being, in general, the product of his power, it is the measure of his force, and in carefully observing it we trace his image. This was especially the case with Dr. Leifchild’s congregation, for he himself had gathered it. He entered into no other man’s labours. He was alike the architect of his own fortune and the builder of his own church—always, of course, ascribing all his success to the highest Source and the Giver of every good gift.

We may, therefore, with advantage cast our eyes retrospectively over the great body of people assembled from all quarters of the Metropolis to listen to the preacher whom they had voluntarily selected out of all around them as their spiritual instructor. We might note many things concerning them, some of which are common to most well-ordered congregations, others of which were more peculiar to themselves.

Two things in particular may be noted of the large congregations assembling at this time in Craven Chapel—their general

intelligence and their family constituency. Their general intelligence was indicated even to a stranger by their marked and unbroken attention to the preacher. He was neither short nor showy, as some ministers are, and the people who could and would give him their uniform attention for a good hour, and occasionally five minutes more, must needs be intelligent as well as devout. Those were not the days of half-hour sermons, at least in chapels; and those sermons were not merely supplementary to the service, but were its very marrow and principal embodiment. Each one, especially in the mornings, was a piece of theological architecture, in which constructive art and prevailing symmetry were obvious to all. Its erection upon a sure and scriptural foundation demanded time and thought, and as course after course was carefully laid, and due proportion severely observed, those who looked on and listened felt confident in the stability of the entire structure. When at length the last stone was placed upon the substructure, the verbal builder would generally pause for a moment, give a slight unconscious nod, and then, standing surely and triumphantly upon the topmost height, utter his eloquent and sometimes astonishing peroration.

This was always consequential from the substructure, and reliant upon its solidity. The intelligent auditors who sat below could almost count up every principal course of argument upon which it was built. The subjacent courses being symmetrically disposed, the practical applications were sequentially deduced. It might be said, that a sort of lightning rod ran up from base to pinnacle, and that the electric fluid of sudden and fiery emotion played always brilliantly, sometimes burningly, over the whole sermonic edifice.

The other special feature in the Craven congregation was its family constituency. During my father's maturest period—the day of his full strength and incessant work—the family character of his audience was at once observable. Pew after pew along the spacious lines of pews below, and pew after pew amidst

the rising galleries above, had its *paterfamilias* at one end, its *materfamilias* at the other, and successively graduated little heads numerous interposed. Much of the sermon was evidently too much for the little heads, and perhaps even for the larger heads, while they had to look after the little ones. Yet it was a truly pleasing, momentary diversion from the exacting train of argument in the pulpit, to glance at the living trains of youthful creatures below. Hundreds of children were crowded into narrow limits and between uncomfortable boards, but there they all sat, wonderfully good, unusually quiet, and all apparently attentive. Parental discipline had evidently brought about this peaceful state of things; but pulpit teaching had also promoted parental discipline. For the Sunday, the preacher was the great father of them all. To him every parental finger was occasionally pointed. When he was engaged in the public prayers, every little head was decorously bowed, and every wandering eye devoutly closed. How those little ones revered the great one, and how he taught them to reverence the greatest One of all—the mighty yet yearning Father—the lofty yet loving Saviour—who said, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,”—they themselves can best remember.

And many of them do remember, now that they sit in other sanctuaries—now that they themselves point other children to other preachers—now that they themselves preside in parental decorum over pews of little ones who have often heard the name of Leifchild from parental lips.

In adverting to the year 1842, Dr. Leifchild notes :—“Amongst the attendants at Craven Chapel I could now number my wife and my son, my brother and three sisters, and my brother’s three sons and three daughters, being all my relatives, who have been strangely brought together to attend my ministry, and many of them to become members of my church.”

One very pleasing consequence of ministering to a congregation

which was cemented together not only by spiritual interests, but also by the inferior yet scarcely weaker cement of family associations, was that Dr. Leifchild could thoroughly train so many of his younger hearers to Christian activity and zeal. This has rendered Craven Chapel a kind of religious training-school, and the fruits of the solicitude and diligence there bestowed on all who cared to profit by them, are at this day matured in several other congregations. Were it not that the persons here alluded to are living, their names and their varied holy activities might be mentioned and detailed. Suffice it to say, in brief, and upon the recollection of the moment, that at Westminster Chapel (under the pastorate of the Rev. Samuel Martin) is one deacon, who was instructed and inspirited by Dr. Leifchild at Craven Chapel; Albany Chapel, near Regent's-park, had two or three deacons who were formerly in the same community; and Bedford Chapel, Camden-town, now enjoys the advantage of their labours. In Westminster, also, a benevolent layman, who in his boyhood attended my father's ministry, has for many years ministered to, and provided for, a little community of his own gathering. With reference, indeed, to individual efforts and lay activity, the warmth of zeal which has radiated from the central source at the principal chapel has long been and is to this day largely felt, not only in the western region of the Metropolis, but also in the provinces, and in many counties.

An instance of the latter class occurs to my recollection as I write:—A young gentleman, the son of a provincial friend, was an inmate of our house while he was studying at University College, London, and a regular attendant upon my father's ministry. In a letter addressed to me, he attributed great benefit to my father's urgent advice that he should study the Scriptures very carefully at stated hours. He is now an influential deacon of an influential church, and has been the mayor of this city. A similar instance will be noticed in the sequel in a letter from Mr. Damon.

But the energetic converts of Dr. Leifchild are not restricted to this country, or to this quarter of the world—some of them have gone to the colonies; and the name of their beloved minister is to this hour honoured and venerated at the other end of the globe. Letters from Australia are now lying before me, in which affectionate reference to the former minister of Craven Chapel is frequently made. Were they given entire, they would do honour to the deceased minister and to his living and active convert. “Do not disgrace me in Australia,” were his parting words to her, and she has honoured him; not only so, but this convert also mentions others. Thus, in one letter she writes:—“My pastor has been to preach at Ballarat, and has told a friend of mine that he met with a fac-simile of myself. When in England she was a member of Craven Chapel, and was converted under the Doctor’s ministry. How my heart rejoiced to hear that one of my Craven Chapel sisters was doing the Lord’s work in that locality! Well, of a truth, to the utmost parts of the earth the dear Doctor’s spiritual children are sent to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ!

“My great desire is that we may be more like our earthly spiritual parent, and be like him, daily ripening, and made meet to sit down with our heavenly Father in His kingdom.” “I am glad to find you still love Craven, that hallowed spot for both our souls.”

The same female wrote a letter from Australia to my father, in reply to one from him to her. In this she says:—“Writing cannot express my joy and gratitude for your kind letter and book,* which to me are invaluable. I received them yesterday. Reading this book is like conversing with old friends, as several of the incidents are familiar to me. They brought the Amicable Society and its delightful meetings fresh to my mind as when I

* The book entitled “A Selection of Remarkable Facts,” more particularly described in the list of Dr. Leifchild’s publications at the end of this volume.

heard you relate them to us. You have written in the book, 'From her former pastor.' O, how often I call you my present one! Your warning and exhorting voice is often sounding in my ears and on my Bible. I read here and there the Doctor's texts. . . . My daily prayer is that your path may shine more and more brightly as you journey onward to the bright mansions prepared for you, and where I hope to shine as a jewel in your crown."

Recollections of a periodical exhibition of particular interest suggest themselves in connexion with the families worshipping at Craven Chapel, viz., the baptism of infants. When these had duly arrived in sufficient numbers, a Sabbath morning was fixed for their public dedication to God; and after the sermon had been preached, the infants were brought out of the vestry, which had, for that morning only, been converted into a nursery, and each one was successively carried up the pulpit stairs by its father, who placing his babe in the arms of the minister, whispered its name, and awaited its return to him when baptized.

While previous preparations for the passage from vestry to the pulpit were being made, the minister publicly explained the purport of this service. "I call it," he would say, "a dedication, for it is chiefly in that light that I regard the baptism of the children of Christian parents. The Jews dedicated their children to God by a painful rite; Christians dedicate theirs by the rite of water-baptism. Both rites are significative of the same thing—the necessity of inward purity. In the water sprinkled upon the child its parents see the sign and emblem of those gracious influences which are absolutely necessary for regeneration; and they then implore the Almighty Father in His own good time and manner to confirm this sign by bestowing the Holy Spirit, and thus sealing their child an heir of heaven. Thus they distinguish between the baptism of water and that of the Holy Spirit. They do not confound them by blending them together, as if there were any necessary connexion between them; but

they view them as separate things, and as distinct as the sign of a thing and the thing signified. The sign of the cross is not the cross itself. There is a connexion of resemblance, and one of necessity; the one may exist without the other; and so it is with the baptism of water and the Spirit. Many have the outward and visible sign of baptism, who never have the inward and spiritual grace; and some have the inward and spiritual grace, who never received the outward sign of baptismal water."

After a ten minutes' address in this strain, the babes began to make their first public appearance. This was always a time of great congregational interest, and it was not easy to keep the young folks in the galleries in good order. The desire to behold each father in his rather trying ascent up the pulpit stairs, and each babe when entrusted to the minister's arms, was eager and universal. A few drops of water fell upon the infant's face, a distinct and deliberate nomination followed, with a few touching words, accompanied by a paternal look, and sometimes an incipient smile in the baptizer; and then a brief but solemn charge to the father, together with the return of the beloved though frequently unquiet child, completed the ceremony. "Take it," exclaimed the dedicator, "take it, and bring it up, I charge you, in the fear of God and the love of Jesus Christ His Son."

As many as ten, twelve, fourteen, and even eighteen infants have thus been solemnly dedicated to God in one morning, in the face of the whole congregation at Craven Chapel—a congregation evidently deeply interested. Many of the baptized babes grew up into childhood and adolescence under the same ministry, and, when brought under the notice of the aged pastor in later life, would sometimes address him affectionately, but rather inconsiderately, thus: "Don't you remember *me*, Sir? Why, you baptized me at Craven Chapel! Surely you have not forgotten *me*?"

On the occasion of the last public baptism which my father

undertook, viz., in 1860, at the urgent request of esteemed friends he related the following singular occurrence:—

“Some years since a respectable young woman accosted me at Craven Chapel, requesting me to dedicate her child to God in baptism. ‘First of all,’ said I, ‘I must ask you some questions. Have you given yourself to God? If not, how can you give your child to Him?’ She replied, ‘I *have* given myself, Sir.’ Then I inquired, ‘Are you a member of my church?’ ‘No, Sir, but of Mr. Stratten’s church at Paddington.’ ‘Why, then, come to me to baptize your child? I would rather not do so. Go to your usual place of worship.’ ‘I ask *you*, Sir,’ returned she, ‘because I myself was *the first child you baptized at Hornton-street Chapel, Kensington.*’ ‘Nay,’ said I, ‘that cannot be, for I remember that baptism very well, and have the name of the child in my pocket-book?’ ‘What was it, Sir?’ she eagerly inquired. ‘Clarence Storer,’ I replied. ‘That was my name, Sir,’ rejoined she. ‘My mother told me about you, and what you said when you baptized me. As soon as I could read, she gave me a Bible; and afterwards I went to hear you preach, and your preaching was blessed to my conversion. I am sure you will be so kind as to baptize *my* child—will you not, Sir?’ ‘Yes,’ said I, ‘and a dozen, if you had them.’ I stated these circumstances to the congregation, and they were specially interested in the dedication to God of this child of my first baptized child.”

Much of the pastoral work which Dr. Leifchild performed did not show itself to the public, as, indeed, is the nature of such work in general. This, therefore, is what a popular preacher, on whom perpetual demands are made for public services, is tempted to postpone or neglect. Time is scanty—sermons demand it all; and preparation for the pulpit becomes increasingly laborious as years exhaust old themes, and curiosity demands new ones. To keep up to the standard which my father had himself erected in the pulpit, would certainly have been high praise

and hard work for any man. Yet, besides this, there were eight or nine hundred members of his church to visit and counsel—to exhort in health and to comfort in sickness. Scattered over half London, uncertain in their hours and homes, absorbed in business, and dispersed here and there upon its claims, a “painful preacher of the word” might have been excused if he had never seen these persons except on Sundays, and never spoken to them except as hearers.

But this was not Dr. Leifchild’s desire. He resolved to be in London, with all its peculiar difficulties, a pastor as well as a preacher; and every spare morning or afternoon was devoted to excursions to all kinds of localities and all classes of residences where and in which any member of his church resided.

Sickness had the first claim upon him; distress and indigence the next; and wealth and respectability the last. This was his own order of the day in visiting; and it may be said that the poorer members of his church, and those who were in the next rank above them, enjoyed the largest share of his personal attention. If any had reason to murmur against his absence from their residences, it was not the humbler people; and if any particular class at this day specially cherishes his name and reveres his memory, it is certainly the class now mentioned.

Early in his pastoral visitations in London he found great difficulty in laying out his time to the best advantage. His leisure hours were so few, and the long miles so many, that he could scarcely make time and distance comport; and no method but one seemed to meet the difficulty, and that one was, the meeting of several members at one time and in one place. Therefore he instituted periodical evening meetings of the poorer members, and of those who had least time at their disposal, in the large vestry of his chapel. These meetings became so acceptable, and were looked forward to with such delightful anticipations, that oftentimes the good folks poured into the vestry too plentifully, and had to find seats in the adjoining pews of the chapel.

Hundreds of happy, if humble, Christians assembled themselves on these occasions, listened to an appropriate address and to familiar counsel from their beloved pastor, and finally joined so loudly in a hymn, that the coldest-hearted visitor could not have refrained from participating in their pleasure, if not in their singing.

The hearty grasping of hands after these services, and the affectionate word or two with the minister, and not the less with his ever-present and ever-pleasant wife, made it manifest that there was no needless restraint, and no fear of presumption. Honest poverty might there appear without a blush for its uncomely guise, and the sons and daughters of toil had no thought of their apparel. In the presiding pastor there was nothing of the great preacher; in his accompanying wife there was nothing of the fine lady. Christian love, charitable consideration, and a holy desire to communicate and receive pleasure of the purest kind, reigned through all those evening meetings of the poorer members in the vestry of Craven Chapel.

What kind of acceptance and effect his ministry found amongst the very poor, let the following simple letter to Dr. Leifchild, sent in 1851 from an inmate of a workhouse, prove:—

“ST. JOHN'S AND ST. MARGARET'S WORKHOUSE,
10, DEAN STREET, WESTMINSTER.

“REVEREND SIR,—Trusting you will not be offended at my taking the present liberty of addressing you by letter, I greatly long to know how you are, but it is not in my power to walk so far at this time of the year; but if, please God, I am spared till the summer, I will come to Craven Chapel and see you. One of the deacons of your church is one of the governors of the house I am in. I thought he might think me bold in doing so. His name is Wilson.

“I worked as long as I was able; but being so heavily afflicted, I was obliged to give up, and come into the house. I have been here this three years past, and I have great reason to bless God for all His mercies to me, a guilty creature. I have a deal of time to read, and

I can examine my own heart on my bed, and pray to God to pardon all my sins, and increase my faith and love in believing.

"Many were the sermons I have heard you preach, and oftentimes, when I am ill and tempted to murmur, I think of one of them, on 'Why should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?'

"I am well taken care of; kept very clean; food good and sufficient; a very kind matron over the women. I may say with David, 'The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground; therefore will I praise the Lord as long as I have my being.'

"My youngest daughter, who was one of your Sunday-school children, is now a member of a Baptist church. I saw her and her husband baptized together twelve years ago. They often come up to hear you. The seed was sown in good ground in Hornton-street (Chapel, Kensington), and, blessed be God, they walk consistently.

"With dutiful respects to Mrs. Leifchild, and hoping this will not give offence,

"I am, with respect,

"Your most humble servant,

"ELIZABETH DEAN."

Instead of offence, this letter gave much satisfaction, and was often read in company.

Social meetings amongst a higher class of members were more difficult to manage, and to direct to a profitable issue. It was some time before the pastor devised a plan which eventually turned out very successful. Previous attempts may first be noticed.

Beginning with a few words on some religious topic, the pastor at first proposed the discussion of a passage of Scripture, and then questioned each person in succession on his or her views respecting its true meaning. It was very soon manifest that scriptural exegesis was by no means a fashionable or favourite diversion for an evening party. Of those who were questioned, some had never thought of the text before; some were of the same opinion as the person who had made the first attempt at a reply; and others were anxious to hear their minister's views,

which they were sure must be correct. This plan, then, was a quiet failure.

At length my father hit upon the expedient of requesting every one to narrate any particular preservation of life, or providential deliverance from danger, or escape from accident, or recovery from sickness, which might be directly attributed to divine interposition, or special divine watchfulness. At first this plan, too, was likely to die of decorous silence; but as one and another became encouraged to attempt a narrative, and emboldened to speak aloud, the object was secured. In the course of time, most interesting evening parties were held at the houses of suitable persons, at which so many narratives of the kind alluded to were elicited by the judicious interrogations and the kind encouragements of the pastor, that those of the persons then present who yet survive, still allude to them with pleasurable remembrance, and some of the incidents then narrated have been repeated from time to time in families now scattered.

The minister would conclude the evening with some appropriate remarks on the most interesting of the facts related, and would then announce a hymn and raise a tune, to which many a voice contributed its melodious part—many a voice long since silent and forgotten in the grave—many a voice now, perhaps, sounding higher notes in a more blessed company.

In all his more lengthened interviews with his people at their own residences, Dr. Leifchild displayed that happy combination of qualities which so particularly befit a pastor. Some of these depended upon temperament, and some upon art and habit. By nature genial, by religion good, by art judicious, he tuned himself and his talk to his company. He commenced and sustained, but did not domineer over conversation. Above all, he had the happy art of avoiding what is vulgarly called “prosiness”—that fatal impediment to personal acceptance amongst the occupied and the young. For the latter he had always a story or a hymn—a jocular minute, and a hearty laugh. No minister was ever

less of a conscious priest in the common parlour; and yet few ministers have more happily made the parlour supplementary to the pulpit.

Amongst the numerous engagements which the pastor entered into for the improvement of the younger portion of his church and congregation, none bore more ample fruit than a class which he established for the mental improvement of young men of intelligence. With this class he read Butler's "Analogy," Paley's "Moral Philosophy," Campbell's "Lectures on Ecclesiastical History," and other similar books. A chapter was taken for an evening's discussion. First, the pastor proposed a series of questions and requested an analysis of the chapter. Then remarks were solicited and encouraged from the young men who chose to make them, and my father endeavoured by all means to stimulate their faculties, to quicken the memory, and to mature the judgment.

On one bench in the vestry, where this class assembled, sat a young man who was engaged in a large stone-mason's establishment. Awakened by the questions proposed, and quickened by the rivalry excited, he learned that he was possessed of powers of mind of which he had hitherto been unconscious. He consulted and conversed with the pastor, was encouraged by him, and thus an impulse to self-helpfulness under Providence was originated in him. Shortly afterwards he obtained a superior situation on one of our principal railways, then in course of construction. Then he took a contract on the same line, and so adroit was he in his calculations that he secured a considerable profit. On this he wisely retired, and resolving to be useful in the cause of religion, repaired to college, took a degree, entered upon the Christian ministry, and preached the Gospel in another country.

On another bench sat a young man who made frequent, and generally judicious, answers to his pastor's questions. In time he emigrated to New Zealand, and there he now is,

as I am informed, a judge. A few years ago he came to England, and spent an evening with us, in the course of which he gratefully referred to the young men's class, in which he first cultivated his talents, and publicly expressed his opinions.

Such are but two specimens of the utility of this class, which demanded not a little of the minister's precious time, and which yielded such valued fruits.

The present page is appropriate for the introduction of one of Dr. Leifchild's memoranda upon the subject of his usefulness to several persons, which was attended with peculiar results:—

"Conversions of some by my instrumentality who afterwards became Ministers of the Gospel.

"SAMUEL CHANCELLOR. He became a Sunday-school teacher in our school at Hornton-street, Kensington, and, after a long course of activity with us, settled as pastor over a congregation at Epping. So useful was he in a humble way, that, though long since deceased, his name is still affectionately remembered.

"J. SMITH, the missionary to Demerara, sometimes called the 'Martyr of Demerara!' He was deeply impressed by a sermon I preached at Tonbridge Chapel (Euston Road), London." (His biographer dedicated the volume to Dr. Leifchild in an appropriate dedication.)

"WILLIAM DAVIS, minister of the Croft Chapel, Hastings. He was the son of a printer at Kensington, and was converted under my ministry there. He went to Hoxton Academy, and afterwards settled at Hastings, where he preached many years." (His son is now a minister in London.)

"MR. KILPIN, minister of a new chapel at Reading. A letter from him gave an account of his emotions and conversion under my ministry at Craven Chapel." (The circumstances are mentioned elsewhere in this volume.)

"MR. CALEB HARRISON, son of the Rev. J. Harrison of Woburn, and brother of the Rev. Joshua Harrison, now of Camden Town. He was under my ministry at Craven, and afterwards went from thence and became a home missionary under Mr. Reynolds, at Romsey, Hants, where he died."

"The Rev. Mr. JUDSON, son of a minister at High Wycomb. He

subsequently settled as minister at Lindfield, Sussex." (He is now a preacher in Ireland.)

"The Rev. JAMES BALDWIN BROWN, B.A., minister of Claylands Chapel, Brixton. He was a hearer of mine, and he became a member of my church. He went to Highbury College, and studied for the ministry. He married one of my nieces, and is the nephew of Dr. Raffles." (Mr. Brown preached a funeral sermon for Dr. Leifchild at his own chapel, in which he paid a cordial and affectionate tribute to his former pastor's usefulness, and in which he said, "I acted under his counsel on all the great occasions of my life. When God laid me aside from my loved and honoured work, he stepped forward for months to occupy my room. Listening to his words, I first felt the inspiration of a preacher's spirit thrill through my being. He lit the flame of zeal and love, I might say passion, for the ministry, which, thanks be to God, has never burnt low on the altar of my heart.")

"The Rev. JOHN SHEDLOCK, M.A. He read for and attended my young men's class at Craven, became a contractor on the Great Western Railway, and afterwards a student for the ministry. He settled at Merton, Surrey, and subsequently in Paris." (He is now Secretary of the Evangelical Continental Society.)

The Rev. J. Forsaith, minister of Orange-street Chapel, may be added to this list, as regards his decision for the ministry. This he has himself stated in page 200 of this volume.

If the lives of the regular hearers of Dr. Leifchild at Craven Chapel were faithfully recorded, in all probability a book of great interest would be the result. True, the majority of such persons may have trodden only a dull and eventless path along the level road of life, but others have perhaps carried with them to the tomb unrecorded histories of deep significance.

Calling to mind the tenants of only two pews in the gallery before my eyes, as I sat in Craven Chapel, I may be pardoned for attempting a brief outline of the points of interest connected with each.

When in early life Mr. Leifchild was travelling from York by a stage-coach, he met with a young female, to whom he addressed (as appears to have been his practice from the first) some words of a religious character. "Where are you going

to?" asked he. "To London," was the reply. "And where after this life?" continued he. "I don't know," answered the young female. Upon this admission, serious exhortation ensued, and the young minister gave the young female a book which she promised to read. "May I ask your name?" inquired she. "You will never know it," was the reply. "Where are you going to?" asked she in her turn. "Home to be married," was the only answer. After this he became very affable and good humoured, and the two parted, never, as they then supposed, to meet again.

Many years afterwards the female alluded to, having meanwhile become the wife of a commercial man, resided in the neighbourhood of Leicester-square. A new minister, and the first pastor, had then come to Craven Chapel. She was anxious to hear him, and repaired to the chapel for that purpose one Sabbath morning. As he proceeded in the discourse mysterious memories seem to haunt her, and the tones of a voice once heard in years long past deeply touched her heart. She looked and listened earnestly, and when she reached her home after the service she exultingly exclaimed, "I have found him! I have found him!" "Whom have you found?" inquired her husband. "The gentleman who gave me that book, so blessed to my soul," added the wife; "the gentleman I met on the York coach so many years ago, and whom I have so often mentioned to you. He is Mr. Leifchild, the minister of Craven Chapel!"

After some difficulty a front pew, in the right-hand gallery from the entrance, was secured by this lady for herself and family. Every Sunday, husband, wife, and sons and daughters, filled that pew, and every Sunday met the writer's eye as he looked up towards his father.

The minister was soon privately reminded of the word in season which he had dropped on the highway so many years before, and of the little book he had presented to his fellow-passenger from York. From the success of this early attempt at usefulness he became particularly interested in this lady and

her large family. Not only was he a diligent pastor, but also, in connexion with his wife, a kind friend and judicious counsellor to that household.

For several years that front pew in the gallery was filled with the entire members of this family; and the children grew up under the beloved minister until they ceased to be children, and settled in houses of their own. At length the mother drew near her end, and testified upon her death-bed to the value of that ministry, and those pastoral and friendly counsels which for so many years she had enjoyed. A very brief account of her sayings during the last day or two of her life may be here annexed.

When she became aware that her life was in great danger, she looked towards her beloved children, and thus addressed them:—
“My dear children, I have often wondered what disease would terminate my life, and now it has come. May you never suffer as I do, but Christ is my support. I long to go to Him—where I shall see His face, and never, never die. Meet me, all of you, in glory.

‘Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.’

His chariot is coming—why so tardy?”

Upon one occasion, when awaking out of sleep, she could not recollect where she was. Dr. Leifchild came in at that moment to visit her, and inquired “Where are you?” Understanding his meaning, she answered, “On the Rock of Ages.”

This was her last day upon earth. Her husband had been summoned from a distance, and she was anxious to see him. Turning herself repeatedly to her children, she inquired, “Is he come?” At length she heard his approaching footstep, and said, “Children, be calm; you see I am calm.” Her husband now interposed, “You are going to a better world.” “I know that well,” rejoined she, and after concluding with him an arrangement which had long been her fondest desire, she added, “now all is accomplished. Ask me no more questions. Let me die; you

have done with me, have you not? Well, then, let me die. Just so, Lord, let me die." She soon afterwards fell into a tranquil slumber and breathed her last.

So died a good woman of the middle class, but of deep piety. Thus strangely had she met the admonitory fellow-traveller of her youth; thus continually did he preach to her and counsel her in middle life and age; and thus consolingly did he stand at her death-bed, and receive her dying testimony.

Years rolled on after her death, and her daughters married and dispersed. One carried the memory of her mother, and of her mother's beloved minister with her to Australia, and there she still cherishes the recollection of both. Another daughter married and settled in London, and, singularly enough, my father came to reside and to die very near her. Not long before his death he visited her, and baptized her last child, at her request, with the name "Herbert Leifchild M——." Singularly enough, too, the writer of these pages pens many of them beneath the same roof. For a time he sojourns where so many memories of his parents yet linger, and he writes this account while his little namesake gambols around his chair. Pleasant, indeed, is the child's playfulness, though not very helpful to the composition of this biography. Thus have children risen up to honour their mother's minister, and thus is the child of one of these children likely to be reminded of him through life.

Returning in imagination to my pew at Craven Chapel, I again look up to the opposite gallery, beyond the family pew just noticed, to one higher in the crowded tiers. Another, and briefer, but also striking history suggests itself in connexion with the occupants I there behold.

Conspicuous amongst the regular attendants in yonder gallery were two soldiers of the Blues. Commanding in stature, and military in attire, they trod the narrow passage running along the top of the gallery with intentionally soft, but actually ringing steps. When the congregation stood up to sing, the two soldiers

overtopped their neighbours, and no one in the chapel, who was not placed out of their sight, could fail to notice them. They were devout worshippers, and most attentive to the preacher. They had, indeed, good reason to be so, as their singular history will show.

Dr. Leifchild was announced to preach at Windsor, at a time when the Blues were quartered at their barracks in that town. Two of them were walking along the street on that very evening when Dr. Leifchild was engaged in the appointed service. As was their wont, they were indulging in profanity and ribaldry. On passing the chapel, one of them observed to his companion, "There's a parson from London preaching in that chapel. Let us hear what he has to say." "Oh," rejoined the other, "it is only a Methodist chapel; who wants to hear a Methodist parson?" "I do," said the first, "so let us go in; we won't stop long." Into the chapel they both went, and they did stop long—long enough to hear the sermon to the end.

S——, who had proposed to his comrade to enter the chapel, was interested by the preacher's manly appearance and address, and, as he proceeded, by his direct appeals to his hearers. Towards the close, when the preacher, according to his wont, became exceedingly animated and forcible, the attention of the two soldiers was rivetted, and tears rolled down the cheeks of S——. As they came out from the chapel, S—— was silent and sorrowful. His companion, M——, less deeply affected, rallied him upon his silence, and exclaimed, "Why, S——, you're never going to be a Methodist, are you? You'll be wanting to hear another preachment, I warrant." "That I shall," replied S——, "and if I can find out where that parson preaches, I'll hear no other while we are quartered in London."

To London and to Regent's-park barracks they returned in due time, and being inseparable friends, they both made their appearance in the gallery at Craven Chapel. While attending there, S—— became deeply convinced of his sinfulness,

acquired knowledge of the truth, and not long after was enrolled as a member of the Christian church there assembling. M—— also was religiously disposed, and these two soldiers became soldiers of Christ, and not only on the Sabbath, but every day in the barracks. On inquiring recently respecting S——, I find that he has retired from the army, in which he was a corporal, upon a pension; but that even now the blessed influence of his labours and prayers lingers about the Regent's-park barracks, and manifests itself in the attendance of other soldiers at two or three contiguous places of worship. S—— himself lives an exemplary life, and is connected with a Christian church in one of the suburbs of London. "Having become a very steady man, Sir," said my informant, "he earns sometimes as much as £5 a week by giving drilling lessons to gentlemen, and to different schools; and, whenever the Doctor's name is mentioned, S—— blesses him for the good he got for his soul from him."

Two strongly contrasted instances of sick-room experience may be added to the above sketches of individual hearers. Fortunately they can be given in the pastor's own words. The first is as follows:—

"I visited a female member of my church, who resided at the Bazaar in Oxford-street, opposite the Pantheon. She was lying dangerously ill when I visited her most frequently. Her husband made no profession of religion, but was very courteous and obliging to me, and invited me to inspect his pictures. I found his wife calm and peaceful, and the husband seemed to be pleased with my visits. I spoke seriously and faithfully to him, and he seemed affected with what I said.

"The wife recovered, but he fell ill of the same disease, and the symptoms soon became alarming. Then he was awakened to his lost condition, and felt all his sins brought to his remembrance. Oh, what fears then agitated him! and oh, what tears he shed! It was long before I could persuade him that there was mercy for him. At length death seemed inevitable, and to my

great joy, I inferred from his expressions that he had found peace through the blood of the Redeemer.

“When I announced to him that his end was thought to be near, he heard the intelligence without the least uneasiness. Had it pleased God, he said, he should have liked to live, merely to show the sincerity of his repentance, and the strength of his gratitude. If he were permitted to recover, his feet should first bear him to pay his vows at Craven Chapel—to which, alas! he had so often refused to accompany his wife. I rejoiced at the prospect of his entering into happiness, should his death follow. I then left him, and thought to see him no more in this world.

“After some days, thinking his funeral might be over, I called at the house. No signs of mourning, no change in the exterior of the house appeared as I approached it. ‘How long has your master been buried?’ inquired I, of one of the attendants. ‘Buried, Sir?’ was the returning question, in a tone of surprise. ‘Buried, Sir? he has recovered, and went out to take the air at Finchley, last Sunday. I dare say, Sir, he will call upon you.’

“He did not call, however, and I only saw him as he was one day walking before me in Wardour-street. When I came up with him, he seemed confused. ‘Ah, Sir!’ said he, ‘I am ashamed to see you. I durst not call on you, for you warned me of the danger of going back if I did recover from the brink of the grave; and I now find my religious impressions were all a delusion.’

“So they unfortunately proved to be. He afterwards removed to America; I could never ascertain his subsequent history, nor did he ever communicate with me. How many instances of the same kind have I known, all tending to show the uncertainty, if not the invalidity, of a death-bed repentance!”

An opposite and very satisfactory death-bed scene and testimony, from one of his faithful young converts, is thus related by the minister; and its hopefulness forms a pleasing contrast to the foregoing disappointment.

"A young person of the name of Gregory, whose brother was for some time clerk at Craven Chapel, came to reside in London, and attended at the chapel. Under my ministry she became deeply serious, and though she removed to a very distant part of the Metropolis, she walked to and from Craven Chapel every Sunday; this she did even while showing signs of consumption. She took down all my sermons correctly, and with an order and fidelity which would have rendered her notes, if printed, no discredit to me. She afterwards became the wife of a devoted teacher in our Sabbath school, who also had a class of nearly twenty young men, whom he instructed in connexion with my ministry, and several of whom joined our church.

"In all these labours his young wife helped him zealously; but, after a few years of religious activity and social usefulness, she drooped, and her life was despaired of. How did I regret to see her like a flower whose beauty was fast fading; yet, how peaceful was her mind! The communing of her spirit with God was reflected in her serene or smiling countenance while I was visiting her, and praying at her side, day after day. Every time I called she was unwilling to part with me. On my last visit she said, 'Sing with me that beautiful hymn,—

'Jesus, thy precious blood was spilt
For sinners! may I hope for me?
Speak, Lord, and cleanse my soul from guilt,
By faith in thee!'

"When I objected that she had no strength, and I no time for it, she answered, 'O yes, you have; it can be sung to this tune,' naming one of our old tunes. I looked distrustful; but she herself began the singing. O, they seemed like the first notes of a spirit breaking from its prison! Her voice soon failed her, and she could only *point* to the last verse, as the hymn-book lay open on the bed,

'Lost in myself, but found in thee,
Let dread of death no more corrode;
It will be life and heaven to see
Thy face, my God!'

"She sang not these words in this world. I heard her sing the first verse, and then I saw her die."

The pastor narrated these particulars to his congregation, who often afterwards united in singing, with peculiar feeling, the hymn referred to, and which was generally announced at the sacramental service. It is here given entire.

"Jesus, thy precious blood was spilt
For sinners! may I hope for me?
Speak, Lord, and cleanse my soul from guilt,
By faith in thee!

"When law and justice urge, demand,
One only plea my case can meet;
Do thou appear, and let me stand
In thee complete.

"When follies past my soul reprove,
O'erwhelm with blushes, and confound;
Unfold the mantle of thy love,
And wrap me round.

"Thus hid in thee, I lose my fear,
No longer terrors shake my soul;
Thy lightnings sheathed, no more I hear
Thy thunders roll.

"Lost in myself, restored by thee,
Let dread of death no more corrode,
It will be life and heaven to see
Thy face, my God!" *

Amidst many most pleasing instances of success in his ministry, there were found, as might be expected, some oddities. There were persons who, not contented with hearing the minister, thought they could instruct him, and the extent of their success may be estimated from the narrative here appended.

"A member of my church, of whom I had heard as being given to strange notions, called on me at my house, and requested to speak with me. He had a book under his arm, and I opined

* From "Original Hymns, adapted to General Worship and Special Occasions." By various Authors: and edited by the Rev. J. Leifchild, D.D. London, 1843.

his object to be a tedious controversy. I invited him to enter my parlour, when he asked me if I had read a pamphlet by Mr. Lewis Way, 'On the Return of the Jews to their own Land;' and further began to inquire what I thought of certain prophecies, pulling a Bible out of his pocket, and commencing to read from it. I at once stopped him, saying, 'Let us have an understanding before you proceed. Are you come to teach or to be taught?' He demurred to this question, but I persevered in requesting a reply. Upon his still hesitating, I said, 'My reason for pressing the question is this. I am your pastor, and if you come to be taught, I will do the best in my power to instruct you. If you come to teach, we, you know, as Independents, choose our own teachers, and you must excuse me if I say that I should not choose you.' He was now indignant, and declared he would quit my church, and join Mr. Irving's church; and he demanded to be allowed to erase his name from the church-book. I cautioned him against seeking to inoculate my people with his sentiments, and said if I found him so doing, I would set a mark upon him, as they did upon the doors of persons infected with the plague.

"I thought it right to inform the church of this interview, and upon his attempting to decoy one member, he was asked, 'Are you the man with the mark?' This he could not endure, and soon left us. It was afterwards found that he had been all the while carrying on a courtship of two women, and had deceived them both." So much for the man with the mark.

SECTION II.

Something should be said of Dr. Leifchild's power as a platform speaker. The platform, indeed, was not his proper or his chosen place; yet, when he did feel prompted to appear there, and when the claims of important and useful Societies, or of the oppressed, were to be advocated, few men could plead them more effectively, or more impressively advert to the leading topics of

the day. His impassioned eloquence would sometimes break forth on such occasions like an irrepressible spring of water, and he has been known not unfrequently to carry away his audience with the force of his oratory. The Anti-slavery Society, the Bible, the Missionary, the British and Foreign School Societies, and several others, found in him a ready and ever welcome auxiliary. He was on the platform to help them with voice and heart, as he had often helped them in his pulpit. Some of these Societies recognised in him one of their oldest friends, from the days of his Kensington labours down to the days of his declining life in London.

The religious journals of the time contain records of his speeches, but to advert to them more particularly would now be superfluous, when the objects of his eloquence have so long since been attained, and when the excitement of the occasions has passed out of the memory of most. Popular speaking is the effort merely of the day, and its effect is almost entirely ephemeral. The platform may be likened to a stage, erected for a particular performance. When that performance has been duly acted out, the spectators retire, and the stage has lost its temporary charms. The pulpit, on the other hand, is a perpetual standing-place, a source of never extinguished light, of never dissipated heat. He who is enthroned in the pulpit, and there girded with power and skilled in application, speaks not merely for the hour, but for all time. The voice which has been impressive there may influence not only for all time, but for eternity. The man, however, who is effective there, can seldom be equally effective on the platform. The solemnity of the one scene hardly befits the excitement of the other, and he who can move by power in the pulpit can seldom lightly touch by playfulness on the platform.

Two occasions of peculiarly acceptable platform oratory by Dr. Leifchild may be briefly noticed before the subject is dismissed in its connexion with him. One was at an Anti-Slavery Meeting at Exeter Hall, over which Lord Brougham presided.

Some temporary circumstances had invested it with particular interest, and I well remember that, when I accompanied my father to the platform entrance, it was blocked up by a dense and restless crowd. Lord Brougham, accompanied by his fair young daughter, preceded us towards the iron railing across the stairs leading to the upper portion of the building. A gate fixed in this railing was attended by a terrified and utterly powerless keeper. The crowd pressed up and on with frightful energy. Lord Brougham had to protect his daughter in the difficult passage of the iron gate, and those close behind him were compressed into the smallest possible dimensions. At length the narrow strait was passed; still, however, the surging throng pressed onward with unreasonable excitement. His Lordship had now upon his hands the additional difficulty of supporting his fainting daughter, and for a few minutes the most serious consequences were apprehended. Cries for concession and compassion were unheeded by the pitiless people, and my father was not only in jeopardy, like the rest of us, but under painful compression. At length the platform was gained, and the meeting commenced.

When my father rose to speak, I feared for a few minutes that the excitement he had passed through, and the immense crowd before him, might unfit him for a successful effort. Soon, however, that fear proved groundless, and I now distinctly remember that when he rose to the height of the great argument of liberty for humanity, his whole soul kindled, and his torrent of eloquence bore away the vast audience with resistless force. When in a moment of exalted passion he prayed that the fetters of every slave might be torn off, as he then tore to fragments the resolution he held in his hand, he attained to one of those impressive and totally unpremeditated effects which no printed report can adequately convey, and to which the enraptured audience testified by enthusiastic and repeated applause. It was noticed that even the chairman, so famous for forensic eloquence, was unusually interested in this happy and acceptable effort.

The other occasion was that of a large meeting at Exeter Hall of the friends of the great Free Church movement in Scotland. Though not myself present, I understood that my father produced a great impression when in one part of his speech he narrated an anecdote of a poor sailor lad, who, having recently landed after a long voyage, was passing over one of the London bridges, when his attention was attracted by a bird-catcher. The man was offering numerous caged birds for sale, all of which were extremely restless and wretched, having apparently been lately caught. The sailor boy stopped and looked anxiously at the cage, the proprietor of which urged him to select and purchase a bird, at the same time praising the singing powers of the unfortunate songsters.

"How much do you want for the whole lot of them?" inquired the lad. "How much?" replied the surprised seller. "Why, you shall have them all for so much," hardly supposing the querist to be in earnest.

After some cheapening a bargain was struck, and "Now," said the bird-seller, "how will you take them? how will you take them all?" "Lend me the cage a minute," answered the purchaser. On being allowed to handle it, he seized it, mounted the stone seat in the recess of the bridge, placed the cage on the parapet, and instantly opened the door. One after another of the restless birds found the way out, and soon the whole of them were away upon the wing, fluttering and wheeling round in all the delight of unexpected liberty. When the liberator returned the empty cage to the astonished bird-catcher, the latter, unable to repress his vulgar wonder, exclaimed, "What ever did you do that for? Are you a fool?" "I will tell you why I did it," said the lad, and a considerable number of curious passengers were now listening around him. "I will tell you why. *I have been a prisoner myself.* I was in prison in a foreign country for nearly a whole year, and I know what it is to wish to get out. So I bought the poor birds and gave them their liberty." The whole

crowd now applauded him, and the lad walked away a well-satisfied liberator of captives. Happily applying this incident to religious captivity and freedom, and to the circumstances of the Free Church of Scotland, the orator made the large hall resound again and again with the plaudits of a sympathising assembly. This was the kind of anecdote he could relate touchingly and apply pointedly. It was apt to the occasion, and in this and the manner of relation and application resides the principal power of a platform orator.

The welcome which Dr. Leifchild received, and his mode of address on the platform, will be most appropriately illustrated in the words of a stranger to him, viz., an American clergyman before referred to, who was on a visit to England in 1840, and present at a meeting of the British and Foreign School Society. In giving an account of the speakers, the Rev. J. A. Clark observes:—

“ Among those who followed this Right Rev. Prelate (at a public meeting at Exeter Hall) was a dissenting clergyman, whose name was no sooner announced than long and loud and continued greetings and bursts of applause rung, and rung, and rung through the hall as though they would never cease. The name of this clergyman was Leifchild. His address was spirited, and to the point. Though he came forward amidst such applause, he seemed entirely self-possessed and unaffected by it. He remarked, that he considered it to be perfectly consistent with his character as a minister of religion, to stand forward as an advocate for general education. He rejoiced that they had before them an object in which Churchmen and Dissenters could unite heart and hand. If there was anything that could draw him towards the Establishment, and annihilate all his feelings of dissent, it was the adoption and holding universally among the members of the Establishment sentiments like those expressed by the Right Rev. Prelate* who had just addressed them. The object which the Society had in view was most important. Education revealed what would not otherwise have been manifest. It took those jewels of mind, which else would have remained unknown, and polished them, and brought them into observation and

* The Bishop of Norwich.

use ; and many bright jewels should it yet be the means of bringing out. But knowledge was only to be valued as it was the handmaid of religion. It did not always prove so. As the wily serpent might concoct the most salutary herbs into its own venom, so the most fatal poisons might be concocted from the stores of learning. The most deadly errors and heresies in the Church had been introduced by the most learned. But because knowledge had been abused, was it to be neglected altogether ? By no means. Let it go forth under the guiding and sanctifying influence of religion, and it will elevate man to the highest pitch of excellence.

"There were several things about the speaker that deeply interested me. I made inquiries in reference to him, and learned that he was the minister of Craven Chapel, near Oxford-street ; and furthermore, that so wonderfully blessed was his ministry, that he was scarcely ever known to preach a sermon without its being made the instrument of conversion to some soul. I am sure you will not wonder that I determined to hear him preach at the earliest opportunity." *

In the year 1836, the overwrought minister was afflicted with symptoms of illness which he had never before experienced, arising, as he soon found, from an inflamed state of the brain. Continued excitement, and unbroken mental labour as preacher, pastor, and platform orator, both in London and in various chief towns of the provinces, had completely prostrated the strong man. He tried occasional relaxations and short absences, and during one of these, he sat on a sofa in a dreary lodging-house in Highgate, bemoaning himself like a simple and witless man.

It was medically declared that nothing but such a thorough change as a continental tour would afford, could meet his case. On August the 19th, therefore, he embarked in the Soho steamer for Antwerp, from which city he set out on the usual, or rather more than the usual, Belgian and Rhine tour.

In September he was at Frankfort, and thence addressed a long letter to his church, in which he breathed a spirit of ardent affection towards them. "Next to my family," said he,

* Glimpses of the Old World. 1840.

"I live for my church and congregation. Never shall I forget the last Ordinance Service which we celebrated together. I then had fears which a disordered imagination (arising from illness) engendered, and which my sober judgment endeavoured in vain to vanquish—that it might indeed be the last Sabbath I should spend on earth. Even, however, in that hour I felt a holy calm, a delightful satisfaction at the result of the divine blessing on my past labours, and at the thoughts of the prosperous state of our happy community. The parting hymn still sounds in my ears."

Everywhere he journeyed, he made copious notes and observations upon objects of antiquity and curiosity, and with a pardonable idea that they might be valuable for publication. A large bundle of papers still remain to attest his industry, and remain, too, in manuscript, to attest his riper judgment. They were sufficient for a volume, but there are more than sufficient volumes on the tour he took. Some observations were interesting to friends, and what was of the greatest moment, all were interesting to himself. To others, it is not of much consequence to learn his opinion that "the Germans are a strange mixture of politeness and vulgarity," though, unhappily for himself, he was soon to experience, even in London, the truth of his travelling note.

In the course of this tour he met with a German literary adventurer, who, simple as he apparently was, subsequently occasioned an entry in my father's notes under the head of "Deliverance from Dangerous Characters." They met at some *table d'hôte*, where the German ingratiated himself with the traveller, and accompanied him to some public museums. Contriving to elicit from the free-hearted Englishman, whose language he spoke imperfectly, his position and address in London, he expressed his intention of visiting that Metropolis for literary purposes, and added that he should then pay his respects to the gentleman whose valued acquaintance he had been so happy as to make. Some complimentary invitation passed in return, and he was soon entirely forgotten.

Upon my father's return to England, he at once resumed his arduous labours, and was hard at work in his study one night, when a double knock shook the door, and alarmed the sermonizer. As soon as the door opened, in came two enormous trunks, followed by a foreigner, who appeared to us all to have made an unintentional mistake, until he grasped my father eagerly by the hand, and reminded him of the invitation he had given to the young literary German, which he, the said German, had now come to accept! The disturbed minister looked at the two huge trunks, and at his wife and his servant, with dismay. The German was the only one of the party undismayed, and coolly divested himself of cloak and wrappers, and took the nearest chair. He was a doctor in philosophy, and appeared to have a good claim to that title, if the philosophical calmness of his present proceedings might be held to justify it. The minister thought he could not at once eject him, and patiently endured what he secretly determined should be a disturbance of but two or three days. In this, however, the host reckoned without his guest, and the latter continued quite as much at his ease as the former was in disquietude. The German's simplicity was amusing while his presence was tolerated, his stupidity provoking when his absence was desired. He understood English when it was agreeable to him, but not when it was unpleasant. His visit seemed so delightful, that it might be indefinitely prolonged. When, at length, he was seriously remonstrated with, and made to understand his host's wish that he would honour some other friend with his company, he affirmed that he had none in England beside his host, and that as to his friends in Germany, he had taken a reluctant farewell of them, in order to accept his English friend's kind invitation to settle in London. As to removal, he had no house to which to remove; as to money, he hoped his generous host would advance him a small sum, which he would repay in German lessons, or poetical translations.

That this adventurer could be agreeable and entertaining, may be readily supposed, but it could hardly be supposed that he would accompany us to chapel, listen attentively to the sermons, commend them, commend the preacher, the people, everything and everybody. Less still could it have been anticipated that he had been the subject of remarkable providential interpositions. But one evening, in the house of a friend, he narrated such a tale of adventures and escapes, that even far more worldly persons than his unsuspecting auditors would have been deceived.

It soon became evident that the only method of freeing ourselves from him was one which we never found to fail,—viz., lending money. He borrowed of us all, and, of course, never repaid any one. It was now easier to propose and to plan his removal; and some fortunate introductions which my father procured for him, led to literary engagements of a lucrative character. He soon afterwards married an elderly female with, for him, a considerable income. He earned money by his pen and by his teaching, and might easily have repaid his benefactor. But when once applied to by letter for such repayment, his reply revealed most incredible baseness: "As for your father," wrote he, "I have long wished to send a bullet through his head." It was very difficult to believe that the simple, smiling, agreeable, and contented visitor from Bonn could, after the reception of so much kindness, have become transformed into one of the vilest and most unscrupulous of enemies. Yet so it was. My father's only expressed reflection was according to his usual formula—"Leave him to Providence; time will show whether he is to continue in prosperity." Time certainly did show an unexpected termination of the German's course. He lost his wife, and, at the same time, probably his principal support; and he soon after died by a pistol-shot from his own hand! So, "the dangerous character" became his own destroyer.

With renovated health came renewed and full labour for

the minister. Incessant work on Sundays, incessant work on week-days, incessant pastoral duties, incessant public invitations—these were his lot; and not one duty, public or private, did he discharge perfunctorily. His whole soul went with his sermons, and his whole heart was given to his people. In such a round of toil his time passed rapidly, and sufficed not for full written comments. All his thoughts, indeed, were in demand for his pulpit, except those which he could command for a projected periodical. A man so indefatigably busy could not find time for a diary, or for long letter-writing. He could not take up his pen for one person, while more than fifteen hundred people demanded his time for them all. The inexorable Saturdays were always before him, and the still more inexorable Sundays came swiftly upon him. Days to prepare sermons, and the day to deliver them, could not, under any circumstances, be neglected. Excepting, therefore, superabundant bundles of sermons, and notes of a summer excursion to Ireland, I find nothing in manuscript of the years then passing worthy of quotation, until we arrive at the close of the year 1839, when the following reflections were penned:—

“I have concluded a year of mercies; one of the best years of my life. I have not been unfitted for preaching for more than three Sabbaths. No enemy has attacked my character. The congregation has kept up unusually well. I have enjoyed great liberty. I have thought more of God, eternity, and a departure to the world of spirits, than ever. I have been more acceptable in occasional labours; I have also been able to conduct the “Evangelist”* with acceptance, and at the close of the year I have published a little work, “Counsels to Ministers,” which, I trust, will be useful.

“Towards the end of the year I have had symptoms of

* A publication of a periodical nature, described in the list of his works at the end.

inflammation, and frequent pains and interruptions; and, I am sorry to say, unworthy fears. I have, however, been relieved, and now think my fears were vain. With Mr. Morris, I have collected £100 for Mr. Fuller, and have prevailed on other ministers to assist me in collecting nearly £700 for Mr. Henry.

"My own people presented me with a handsome gift on the first day of the year. During its passage, my relatives have come about me. Several interesting conversions by means of my ministry have been brought before me. Mrs. L. and myself closed the year with earnest supplications, and with lively and thankful acknowledgments for all our mercies to the Great Donor.

"Blessed be the Lord for the whole."

In the year 1841 Mr. became *Dr.* Leifchild, not from any motion of his own. He neither expected nor desired the distinction; but it came spontaneously, as the annexed extract will show:—

"I received a letter from the then *Dr.* Cox* of Brooklyn, New York, through the medium of *Dr.* Morison of Brompton, containing these observations:—

'I have read your Memoir of Mr. Hughes, and your other works, and have proved my regard and esteem for you by successfully invoking an honour to your name—that of Doctor in Divinity—from the University of the City of New York.

'I would first say that our usage now in America is generally such as to dispense with the etiquette of a diploma for honorary degrees. They are noted, recorded in *tabulis collegii*, announced from the throne of the chancellor on commencement day, and then published in all the newspapers; and so the evidence is complete as *ratum, fatum, et sacramentum*. This was the only reason that the formality was waived in your case. I was then a member of the Board, and can speak with authority, were it necessary.—Yours, &c.,

'JAMES H. COX.'

* A highly-respected and influential American minister, now deceased. He had preached at Craven Chapel for my father.

"This fact being announced by Dr. Morison in the 'Evangelical Magazine,' the title was fastened upon me without any choice in the matter."

To Dr. Leifchild belongs the honour of having originated or brought into operation the now well-known Evangelical Alliance, as the following record of his own will prove:—

"Several proposals having been made for the union of Protestant Evangelical Christians of all denominations upon a large scale, and all allusions to such an union at public meetings being hailed with pleasure and applause by the audiences, I resolved to put the project into practice. I then consulted with my friend the Rev. James (now Dr.) Hamilton, of the Scotch Church, Regent Square, the Revs. Dr. and William Bunting, and some others, respecting their willingness to unite with me in announcing and holding a meeting of congenial persons for prayers and addresses on this subject, at Craven Chapel, on the ensuing New Year's day. My friends warmly espoused my proposal, and promised their cordial co-operation.

"Accordingly, on Monday, the second of January, 1843 (the first day of the year coming on the Sabbath), the desired meeting was held at my chapel, after a widely-circulated announcement. I had some fears for its success; but it then appeared that we had rated too low the amount of good feeling amongst Christians in relation to this object, for the attendance was large for the time, and the interest deep. The Revs. Dr. Bunting and Mr. Latrobe (Moravian) took part in the devotional services, and the Revs. James Hamilton, W. M. Bunting, and myself (in place of Dr. Harris, who was ill) gave the addresses. Doubts and objections on the part of some were soon removed, and the flame then enkindled was not suffered to expire.*

* Mr. James of Birmingham thus referred to this meeting in a letter to a religious journal:—"I have just risen from my knees, which have been bent in adoring gratitude to the God of peace for the novel, holy, and delightful

"I published a pamphlet on the subject, entitled, 'Union without Uniformity,' and special meetings were speedily held to carry on the subject by the formation of a general organization. On the first of June following a large meeting was held, with a view of preparing the public mind for further proceedings, and a warm glow of brotherly love was felt in all our hearts.

"A similar movement having been earnestly desired in Scotland almost simultaneously with our own in London, though without previous personal communications, several of the leading Scotch brethren now concerted with us, and a public meeting was planned at Liverpool, to consult upon the proposed organization. In August the ministers and members of no less than seventeen denominations met in the Music Hall at Liverpool, and, after much highly-encouraging and delightful communion and prudent deliberation, they returned to their homes with renewed brotherly love."

Such was the commencement of the Evangelical Alliance, in the proceedings of which Dr. Leifchild always took the warmest interest. He ever regarded it as at least the partial realization of his prayers and prevailing aim for many previous years. To bring all evangelical believers together, to give prominence to points of agreement, and to keep points of difference in abeyance, was the leading thought in many of his sermons, supplications, and conversations. No man was more consistent in his denominational views, and yet no man was more ready to sink them in silence when objects higher than all denominational distinctions came before him. He loved Congregationalism, and he lived an Independent; but, more than all, he loved Christ, and those who loved

scenes of Christian union and brotherly love that were exhibited last Monday at Craven Chapel. Blessed were the people that heard 'the joyful sound,' and witnessed the heavenly sight of that most solemn and momentous convocation; and blessed above all was the beloved and honoured minister at whose invitation the assembly was gathered. From that never-to-be-forgotten morning Dr. Leifchild will have acquired fresh claims to affection, and his spacious place of worship new sanctity, in the estimation of the religious public."

Him. In them he saw not Wesleyanism, or Baptism, or Moravianism; in them he saw the image of Christ formed; in them he beheld the same spotless image as he contemplated in his own breast; in them he discerned not so many different sects, but so many bright mirrors, which, when no inferior objects intervened, gave back only the pure light of heaven.

These sentiments were not born in him of indifference to creeds, nor of insensibility to alleged evils in other communities. They were not the result of secret leanings to any other body of believers rather than his own, but simply the consequence of breadth of view, spirituality of mind, and the yearnings of a loving heart. He knew all the several colours in the ecclesiastical spectrum, and could at pleasure discriminate and discourse upon them as well as any man. But he was not an optical student, nor always an observer of diversities of hue. He preferred to contemplate his fellow-believers under the bright and unresolved beams of universal sunlight. He was enamoured of the white light of Christian affection.

Why, thought he, should not Christian life be brotherly love? Why should apostolic exhortations be a dead letter? Why should the maintenance of creeds and sects prove the most binding cement and exert the strongest attraction? Why should strength be expended chiefly in controversy, and power displayed mostly in combat? Why should there only or chiefly be a chill reserve and a nominal fraternity amongst believers in the same cardinal truths? For himself, all who listened to him knew that the highest aspirations of his noble spirit were towards that public brotherly communion upon earth which he hoped, yea, even panted to enjoy in its perfect and uninterrupted realization in heaven.

A summer tour which he took in 1843 may be particularly noticed, as it was, perhaps, the one he most enjoyed of all the brief excursions in England which his absorbing avocations permitted. So overworked was he by the time that summer

arrived, and so widely known in all the customary resorts of metropolitan tourists at home, that he sighed not only for relaxation, but also for obscurity. "Where can I go," said he to his son, "where I shall not be known, and not be pestered to preach?"—"To the Land's End," replied I, *impromptu*. "To the Land's End we will go," said he, at once and decisively. Towards the Land's End, accordingly, we were soon on our journey.

Crossing to Torpoint Ferry from Plymouth by a large floating bridge, which often conveys about one hundred people, besides vehicles, we first set foot in Cornwall. Unacquainted with that county, and by no means certain how we should traverse it, we began to inquire for stage-coaches, when our attention was directed to a travelling van which was destined for Looe, a town on the coast, and directly in our way. This our first excursion by van was more eventful than pleasant, for we were overturned in its course, and experienced some difficulty in continuing our journey. In a popular publication* I have detailed these circumstances, and fully described the Cornish vans—a peculiar institution of the county, now, alas! nearly obsolete.

In the Cornish vans my father thoroughly enjoyed himself, and I question if he would have exchanged them for the most luxurious private carriage. Unknown as the minister of Craven Chapel, though evidently by his costume a minister of some sect, he could converse with his fellow-travellers freely and at leisure. They were all soon at home with the genial gentleman, and every company was sure to have one or two Methodists, Cornwall being the great county for them; and at that very time there were no less than seventeen thousand Methodists in it, according to the Conference returns. The unceremonious and unrestrained

* "Cornwall: its Mines and Miners. With Sketches of Scenery. Designed as a popular Introduction to Metallic Mines." By the Author of "Our Coal and our Coal-pits; the People in them, and the Scenes around them." Longmans & Co., 1855.

minister was soon in the full tide of conversation. No one came amiss to him, from a Methodist to a miner, and he was tolerant of every travelling accompaniment, from a big basket to a small baby. Not being so tolerant myself, I contrived to ride outside with the driver, and, as I looked straight before me, could hear the ceaseless flow of inquiry and information behind me. Details of husbands and wives, children and cottages, mines and minerals, Methodist ministers and Methodist chapels, and an occasional tale or two of dark or delightful "experience," gave wings to the happy hours, and made ample amends for the slow revolutions of the van-wheels.

Space fails to add how we enjoyed the bold scenery of the Land's End; a long night-walk near Cape Cornwall, under a splendid moonlight; long diurnal strolls by bold sea-cliffs, pauses on jutting headlands, *détours* to see rocking-stones and Druidical piles, and sojourns in little towns and mining villages. One paragraph, however, in a letter of my father's during this tour, must be here extracted:—

"God has been very mindful of us and merciful to us. His sleepless eye watches over us, and His omnipotent arm sustains us. I think of Him always and everywhere, and see Him in everything. This makes night and day, sea and land, at home and abroad, pleasant to me. We commend you and all our kindred morning and evening to Him, as I doubt not you do us."

The year 1843 was, on the whole, a very pleasant and profitable one, as the minister himself notes at its close in the following terms:—"On Dec. 30th I preached from Psalm xxiii. 6—'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.' I have come out of the old year into the new one without a disease in my body, a taint in my character, or the want of any real comfort in life. I will sing like David, on one occasion "of mercy and judgment;" but I can emulate a higher strain, and say with him on another occasion, 'I will sing of goodness and mercy.' I will go on singing, and so cure sorrowing. This shall be the

burden of my song, with all the cares of life and fear of failing, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.'"

No particular event, either personal or ministerial, in the year 1844, called for particular notice; and of that year, therefore, there is no particular record. Constant work and continued success probably characterised this one, like many others at Craven Chapel. Perhaps the absence of record sufficiently proves that it was one of peace as well as prosperity.

The next year, however, has its records, and one in particular of an event which certainly occasioned my father some temporary anxiety, and which might, but for his prudence and his firm seat in the pastoral chair, have caused him considerably more. This leads me to speak in general of his government of his church, as its head as well as its preacher.

It is, perhaps, an unusual testimony to the good principles of the people, as well as the government of the minister, that during his entire pastorate at Craven, no serious difference ever occurred between *himself* and his charge. Indeed, the same may be affirmed with relation to his three pastorates. In the course of twenty-three years of pastoral rule on the one hand, and popular subjection on the other at Craven Chapel, notwithstanding continual openings for discontent in so thoroughly popular a constitution as that of an Independent church—notwithstanding, also, the presence of a variety of tempers, and the usual sprinkling of turbulent spirits and religious oddities—the whole mass of people were all content, as a body, with their proper places, and all paid due deference to their chosen head.

This speaks well for the people, and equally well for the pastor. Had he not governed them wisely, they might have mutinied; if not prudently, several would have plagued him; if not firmly, others would have forgotten their place and his. Those who knew him long and well in this relation were accustomed to say, that he was not more a master of minds in the pulpit, than a master of tempers in the pastoral chair. Though

he did not magnify his gifts he did magnify his office, and made it manifest that as he trifled with the proper calling of no one, so he would suffer no one to trifle with his. As a private gentleman he might be approached with freedom, and even playfulness; as a public teacher he would demand due deference.

The long preservation of unbroken peace in this church rendered the more notable the only instance of its disturbance, in the year 1845. This arose simply or ostensibly out of a disagreement on the part of a few of the people with the deacons, and hinged upon a question as to the right of the latter to discharge the leader of the choir without consulting the church as a judicial body. In other and lighter words it might be said that

“The sons of harmony came to blows.”

That the sons and daughters of harmony frequently do display a pugnacious spirit is much to be lamented, especially where, as in this case, the leader of the choir, to whom all looked for the key-note of harmony, gave forth only a note of discord. This is only another proof of the frequent absence of music in people's souls when it is professedly upon their tongues.

The above affair was entirely distinct from my father, except in so far as he identified himself with his deacons. An attempt, however, was made to divide the church upon it. Malcontents met and grumbled, and separated and grumbled again. The singers could keep time, but not temper. The dismissed leader could keep neither, and went about declaring that “sing or starve” was his fate. If he did not open his mouth to sing it was in vain that he opened it to eat. It was true he had two trades—one to fit soles to men's shoes, and the other to fit sounds to their souls. But now an undiscerning public discouraged him in both. What was he to do? Into the public ear he could not pour his tale of woe, into the congregational ear he could not pour his woeful tones. The only thing he could do was to denounce the defenceless deacons, and this he did in his deepest base.

This affair resulted in the secession of a small minority from the church, all or nearly all of whom lauded my father, yet left him; and there ends all present interest in the disturbance.

Serious treatment of this diaconal assault would now be utterly misplaced. The deacons survived it, were happy, and died natural deaths. The church survived it, flourished, and almost forgot its former friends. The minister survived it for many years, and from it suffered nothing in the end, either in fame or fortune. The dismissed leader, too, survived it, and the considerate minister took especial care, that as he did not sing, so he should not starve. He urged a subscription for him at the chapel, where, though not allowed to "raise a tune," the disappointed musician was allowed to "raise the wind;"—a wind which, coming from the right quarter, blew him £50. Moreover, he got a recommendation from my father which secured him the favour of a public body, and through them a safe seclusion in some suburban almshouse. There he is credibly reported to be flourishing at this day every way, except musically.

The following year not only brought additions to the church, but likewise a meeting on a subject of considerable interest to the worshippers and the minister. These are his words concerning it:—

"In 1846 a congratulatory meeting was held in the chapel to celebrate the pleasing event of the liquidation of the large debt which had lain upon the place from the time of my coming to it. Mr. Wilson, the founder of this interest, had only lent the necessary money (though without demanding any interest for his loan) until the church and congregation were able to repay him. Such was his usual practice, but he sometimes assisted largely in donations. When I came I found the debt exceeded *seven thousand pounds*, to liquidate which the revenue of the chapel (after deducting my salary*) was applied to its reduction. The sum

* In accordance with the usual practice in Congregational churches the entire produce of the seat-rents should have been received by the minister.

thus applied every year was as much as five or six hundred pounds. Mr. Joshua Wilson, the son of the founder (who had died after a long illness and by an excruciating malady), agreed to remit a portion of the principal sum yet remaining to be paid, and then the removal of the whole debt was accomplished.

"The neighbouring ministers attended the meeting, and expressed their congratulations, some of them (particularly my near neighbour, Dr. Archer) in terms far too eulogistic of myself."

Dr. Leifchild paid a visit to Scotland in 1849, at the earnest request of the Evangelical Alliance of London, to attend its meeting at Glasgow. "There," says he, "I found to my surprise and pleasure that I was well known, through the visits paid to Craven Chapel by the Christian merchants and lawyers when visiting London. Mr. Moncrieff had for several years regularly attended at Craven Chapel during the weeks he was annually in London. He knew all its concerns, proving the great interest he took in it. At his invitation I stayed at his house and with his delightful family.

"I presided at one of the principal meetings, and succeeded in interesting the people in my address. I preached for Dr. Robson, Dr. King, and dear Dr. Brown at Edinburgh, on my way home. At Edinburgh I met also with occasional attendants at Craven Chapel, and received great kindness from them all. I had several presents of books with the autographs of their authors."

The next year this respected minister arrived at a period of his pilgrimage which might well call for particular notice and congratulation. He received both in the manner he has recorded.

In this chapel, during the continuance of my father's full strength, the income from seat-rents and quarterly collections was generally about £1,400 per annum. At no time did he receive so much as one half of this income for his stipend, and for some years he received far less than was commonly supposed. The trust-deed contained a restricting clause on this point.

"On February the 14th,* 1850, we held the usual annual financial meeting at Craven Chapel, for the purpose of hearing a statement of the pecuniary affairs of the chapel and the various Societies in connexion with it. Before proceeding to business, one of the deacons, Mr. Swaine, to my surprise, requested our attention to a very different subject. He then read a highly congratulatory address to me on the return of my seventieth natal day, which commenced as follows :—

"‘DEAR DOCTOR,—Understanding that you would this day attain the full age of threescore years and ten, a few of your attached flock resolved that the epoch should not pass without some such special notice as the event suggests and demands. They are well assured that this resolution will commend itself to our brethren and sisters, the members of this church and congregation in general; and that, not the few only, but *all*, will rejoice in the opportunity thus afforded of presenting you with their sincere congratulations, and expressing heartfelt desires that the returns of this day, yet allotted to you, may be truly happy! If, by reason of that strength of constitution which the God of Nature has bestowed upon you, your days should extend to fourscore years, He *can*, and we pray, if His wisdom may permit, that He *will*, make them days of continued, though moderated, “labour,” and without the “sorrow” of great and painful infirmity.’”

After proceeding at some length in a pleasing and complimentary strain, the practical object is thus touched upon :—

“Hearing of your purpose to remove, and your object in removing, it occurred to us that we might avail ourselves of the circumstance, and present the tribute of our affection and respect in a form that might facilitate your views. Accordingly, dear Sir, we request your acceptance of £250, not as a mere pecuniary gift, but in token of desire to co-operate with you in providing for your future residence at a convenient rental. We are aware that the sum thus tendered may be less than the object will require; and we present it only as a foundation originated by a comparative few, in the assurance that others will gladly swell the amount by the free-will offerings of their common attachment.

* His birthday; though, as he notes, the correct date was the 15th.

"But for the delicacy that was required, at least in the first instance, our friends, the members of the church and congregation generally, would have been apprised of our intention; and we trust that as assuredly we meant them no disrespect by our reserve, we shall have the full and free pardon of all who may be now first informed of the design. They will permit this address, we are persuaded, to be considered as from the body at large, and concur in the prayer, that your latest days may be your happiest; that your beloved partner and our beloved friend, Mrs. Leifchild, may share richly the same bright hopes that sustain your own heart in the vale of years; and that your fondest desires in reference to your son, as a minister of Christ, may be answered to the full."

(Signed on behalf of the Church and Congregation by the Deacons.)

"I was taken completely by surprise," adds Dr. Leifchild, "as not a word of what was to be done had escaped from any lips to myself, or to Mrs. Leifchild. I acknowledged their kindness, and expressed my great satisfaction at receiving such a testimony on several grounds,—such as that there had been no opposition to me; no flattery in my ministry; no actions to propitiate their good feeling; no prospect of my speedily leaving them; and no publicity attending this act of kindness for the sake of *éclat*. I added, that I hoped they would make no parade of this meeting in the public papers, and that I was still willing to serve them to the utmost of my power. The final present was £405, together with the address beautifully written and ornamentally bound."

Dr. Leifchild appeared next year in a new and highly honourable position, as the reader of an Address to Her Majesty; concerning which reading his note-book contains the subjoined passage:—"On Tuesday, the 11th of Jan., 1851, as the Chairman of the Three Denominations of Protestant Dissenters, I was appointed, at a meeting for this purpose, to read the Address to Her Majesty, agreed to be presented on the subject of the 'Papal Aggression.' Twenty of us were deputed to proceed to Windsor Castle; where, after waiting for some time, we were introduced to Her Majesty in her 'closet.' She was attended by Prince

Albert, Lord John Russell, Sir George Grey, and by other lords in waiting. I was struck with the change in her appearance since we approached her upon her accession to the throne. Simply attired, she stood a little elevated, and I advanced towards her with the Address, which I read distinctly and with proper emphasis, without the least trepidation. She was most attentive, and seemed as if she not only understood, but felt what was said. I kissed her hand, which was placed on my own, at the same time bowing, but not kneeling.

“I received the congratulations of my brethren upon my manner of reading the Address, as we retired to a large room where liberal refreshment was prepared for us. There two gentlemen joined us, one of whom inquired of a Baptist brother who we were, and what our object was. The brother explained, and was proceeding at length to denounce the Pope and popery, when his interrogator smiled, and said, ‘I ought, perhaps, to tell you that I am Lord —, and, together with Lord Vaux here, have just presented to Her Majesty a loyal Address from two hundred and fifty thousand Catholics.’ He then handed to me, whom he understood to be the chairman, a copy of this Address, which, as compared with ours, was meagre and evasive in the extreme.”

It is always a time of anxiety when the aged minister of an important Independent church finds it necessary to obtain regular assistance in his pulpit. This period was especially anxious at Craven Chapel, its position being so prominent and its minister so popular. The assistant to such a man as Dr. Leifchild must not only be gifted, but also capable of co-operating with him, and perhaps of succeeding him. Those, however, who might be the most capable, might also be the most reluctant to occupy so conspicuous a position, and to undertake such an onerous charge.

Several highly respectable ministers now temporarily occupied the pulpit, and were heard with prospective views. No arrange-

ment, however, was made until my father introduced a gentleman from Brighton, who obtained many suffrages, and ultimately an invitation to be assistant-minister. Had his career been longer, my father's pastorate might have been longer also; but it was rather short, and the difficulties of securing assistance had again to be encountered.

The deceased minister has noted some particulars of his next assistant, which, as they betray a sense of wrong and ingratitude, it will be advisable to pass over.*

How readily the pastor of Craven Chapel recovered from the annoyance, and, as he regarded it, the ungrateful usage which he had experienced in one quarter, may be seen in the annexed memorandum upon entering the following year. This is appended with all its merely personal references, as demonstrative of his elasticity of mind, when others not so hopeful might have found cause for less cheerful expressions and less grateful acknowledgment:—

“We have had a happy day on the Sabbath—a token of good. Many communicants, though severely cold weather, and evidently a good and holy feeling. The service in the evening was most interesting, with an excellent sermon by Mr. Richards. I held a meeting afterwards in the rooms below,† which were crowded; and though it was protracted till half-past nine, the people seemed as if they would stay till midnight.

“But my future course hangs in uncertainty. We begin to think Mr. H. will fail us, and we know not where to look else—

* The only particular worth extracting from Dr. Leifchild's notes on this affair is one that shows his disinterested conduct in pecuniary arrangements:—“I have defrayed, out of my own salary, *all the expenses* of my two assistants, amounting to about £700 (£691). This, with the additional demands made upon me by Mrs. Leifchild's illness, brought me very low in pecuniary matters.” Were other circumstances stated, this disbursement would appear still more noble. He did not at this time accept even the ordinary pecuniary arrangements made for his vacation.

† The large school-rooms below the chapel.

where for a successor. I feel the difficulty of getting supplies for the Sabbath evenings continuing and increasing. But my health is unusually good, and my spirits too. My memory fails me in names, and in spelling them, but *not in preaching*. Yet failure of all my faculties must come. I have had a foolish dread of paralysis; but I look to God to banish it, for I have no symptoms of it; but I dread a torpid, lifeless, and useless state. Mr. Jay had a stone in the bladder; Dr. Wardlaw, a disease of the heart. I have no real malady. My chest and lungs and the air vessels, notwithstanding my severe attack of bronchitis, seem almost as strong as ever they were.

"I have received numerous kind letters, and my people fail not in their accustomed presents. Mrs. L. is increasingly deaf, but the Lord sets against this her invigorated health and spirits, and I comfort her to the utmost of my power, so that we pass our days pleasantly together. John came home on the second day of this year, well, safe, and much improved in appearance, so that we have great cause to acknowledge the faithfulness of God in answering prayer.

"I remarked to a gentleman this day in an omnibus, 'There is great difficulty in getting property, in keeping it, and in disposing of it. I am free from all such cares: for I never had a lawyer, a physician, or a banker; and I have never had a want but what was properly supplied.'"

Having no lawyer, no physician, and no banker, he might have been happy enough in his simplicity had not church affairs pressed heavily upon him. With enfeebled shoulders he had still to stand as a ministerial Atlas, his burden being his chapel and his world its concerns. "I now," says he, "called the people together, and asked for three new deacons. Two out of three were chosen, and I stated the plan to be henceforth pursued. I myself would preach on the Sabbath mornings, and take the evening service; but settled ministers in the Metropolis would be invited to preach on the Sabbath evenings. We

succeeded, indeed, in obtaining several of the most approved ministers; but all found a difficulty in leaving their own pulpits, and almost always stipulated that I should supply their place. This I tried to do several times, but I found little relief by these exchanges, and the congregations fell off in the evenings. My people liked neither variety nor uncertainty. The deacons, however, together with the people, continued attentive and attached to myself; and several of those who attended my chapel from considerable distances assured me that they came wholly on my account, and should certainly leave when I retired.

“I now renewed my intimation to the deacons that I wished to retire from the pastorate. Two of them, being in Yorkshire, heard and conferred with two ministers whom they thought of as possibly suitable to succeed me. One of these promised to supply at Craven, in compliance with my invitation, but no arrangement could then be entered into with him.

“Not a soul breathed a wish for my removal, and the people still rallied round me on Sabbath mornings. But having made up my mind to retire, on the 1st of October, 1853, I invited twenty-six of my tried and devoted friends, being the most important members and seatholders, to meet at my house. They all came, and I stated my intention to resign as soon after Christmas as a suitable successor could be seen to be probable. They were grieved, and asked if I had made up my mind. I answered, ‘Quite.’ I then left them for awhile, and on my return, Mr. Joseph Brown, in the name of all, addressed me most affectionately. They regretted my decision, but could not blame me for making it, and thanked me for my candour.

“At the next church meeting, which was special, I went nearly over the same ground, and then saw many tears and heard many sobs. No one, however, blamed me, and the propriety of my decision was generally acknowledged. In many quarters out of doors it was highly commended.

“On the 30th November, I attended the London Missionary

Society's meeting at Exeter Hall, held for the purpose of interesting its friends in the subject of additional missionaries. I had the honour of moving the first resolution. I now found that such meetings were very fatiguing to me, and I resolved to attend no more.

"My mind was easy after my decision to retire, and I was much helped, both in composing my sermons and preaching them. I felt that God was not displeased with me, for I consulted His will. I acted only as I felt moved by Him, and I was confident that He would still lead me aright, although I knew not how nor where."

On April 30th, 1854, Dr. Leifchild preached his farewell sermon at Craven Chapel, from the passage, Col. i. 28. His previous sermon had been from the words in Philippians iv. 8, 9. He then relinquished a chapel in which his most powerful and persuasive sermons had been preached; down those pulpit stairs he descended like a king who had voluntarily abdicated his throne. He abdicated while he was neither infirm nor incapable. His eye was not bedimmed, nor his body enfeebled, except in some proportion to his years. His ear did not require to be unstopped, his limbs did not demand support, his sermons were not merely affectionately tolerated. Yet it was prudent in him to retire while in the full possession of his faculties and the full consideration of his friends. He abdicated, moreover, when there was much to relinquish. The church still included about five hundred communicants, and the numerous Societies which he established in connexion with it, were for the most part in considerable vigour, and were sustained by a large number of attached supporters. Altogether, it was a graceful act as well as a prudent step; it was an act which, though not indispensable, he never regretted; it was an example which his friends and brethren everywhere commended.

On the 2nd of May, 1854, deeply interesting valedictory services were held at Craven Chapel in connexion with Dr.

Leifchild's public retirement from the pastorate. The Rev. James Stratten, then the minister of Paddington Chapel, commenced with some personal reminiscences to this effect:—

“My first interview with Dr. Leifchild was forty-and-two years ago. He was at that time pastor of the Hornton-street Chapel, Kensington, and I a student of the Hoxton Academy. I walked over to Kensington with Mr. Davies, now of Hastings, who had been sent to Hoxton Academy by Dr. Leifchild, and with Mr. Clack, a fellow-student, now in heaven, to see Mr. Leifchild, as he was then called. We were received by him with great courtesy and kindness; and I remember he favoured us on that occasion with some important remarks and observations on a difficult passage respecting our Lord being in the temple when only twelve years of age, and the clause particularly dwelt upon was, ‘Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?’ But think of forty-and-two years ago! What changes we have witnessed! What departures have taken place! What holy, loved, and honoured men, with whom Dr. Leifchild and myself have had intimate and Christian fellowship, are not now with us, but are with Christ, and in glory! Oh, what a mercy to him and to me, that we can meet, after an interval of forty-and-two years, and not be afraid or ashamed to look one another in the face, but feel that we are Christian ministers, and thank God that we have not to express any regret that we have devoted ourselves to the sacred service, but rather to rejoice that, by the arm of Almighty power, to this hour we have been so holden up.

“The next noticeable thing, as far as I am personally concerned, in connexion with Dr. Leifchild, was his removal from Kensington; and he did me, on that occasion, the favour and honour to request me to preach in the morning of the day of his farewell; and I did so preach, taking the morning service, and he himself preaching the farewell sermon in the evening.”

Afterwards he proceeded thus, in relation to the topic of the day:—

“In my judgment the church which has enjoyed his ministry for so long a period is laid under deep responsibility and obligation. I need not characterise that ministry—the bold, faithful, fearless, uncompromising declaration of the principles of the Gospel, with pathos, and by appeals to the consciences of men, piercing, and oft-

times victorious. It has pleased God to bless his ministry abundantly. Very many have been the conversions to God wrought by him as the instrument in the divine hands ; whilst the people of God have been instructed, replenished, and edified ; the record and the registry of the impressions which have been made are on high. Men called out of darkness into light by his ministry are garnered safely and sweetly in heaven, and the effects of his twenty-three years of preaching and pastorate will go on, and will have their issues in eternity.

“ I may mention that the ministry of Dr. Leifchild has not been confined to this place of worship. There is scarcely a town of any considerable population or importance in Great Britain, where his voice has not been heard, where numerous auditors have not listened with profound attention to the lessons of his wisdom, the force of his appeals, and the clear and transparent manner in which he has represented truth. He has sustained, to a considerable amount, most of the great institutions which have arisen in our time, and they are under deep obligation to him for his zeal, energy, and laboriousness, and the exercise of those great capacities, physical and mental, with which it has pleased God to endow and adorn him. His ministry will be seen to have had an effect, not in this place of worship or in the Metropolis alone, but throughout the entire British dominions ; and I feel that, in connexion with missionary services, without exaggeration or hyperbole, throughout the world. I think I ought to say all his brethren in the ministry have every reason to look upon him with reverence and affection for the cordiality, the friendliness, the brotherly kindness with which he has received us all. When we have been in difficulty, when we wanted advice, when we sought counsel from him, we have never gone to him in vain ; and nobody, I suppose, ever left Dr. Leifchild under circumstances like those to which I now refer, without being wiser and better for the conversation which had been holden, and for the light which had been shed.”

The following enthusiastic utterance of the same speaker was received with corresponding enthusiasm :—

“ Do not mistake this day by supposing that Dr. Leifchild now abjures public service, repudiates any principle of Christian faith, secedes or goes away from the light of truth or the glory of the Lord ; exceedingly the reverse of this ; to his heart's core, I doubt not, intense

affection burns and brightens towards the Lord Jesus Christ. And if Christ wanted martyrs, as in ages past He had them in Polycarp or Ignatius,—I doubt not your venerated minister with all his heart and soul might be led away to seal with his blood the truth and testimony which he has delivered; and I, if I were so required, would follow his steps and go in like manner."

A portion of the address of Mr. George Wilson, an active and serviceable deacon (now deceased), will best show in a small compass the effects of Dr. Leifchild's preaching and the numerical results of his pastorate:—

"He has been specially a *preacher*, and what sort of a preacher he has been you all full well know. He has been, in the strictest sense of the term, an evangelical preacher. Christ and His cross has been all his theme, and in him the prophecy of the evangelical prophet, as in a thousand other cases, blessed be God, has been fulfilled. Christ has been exalted; Christ has been extolled; Christ has been set high in every sermon he has preached. The deity of Christ, and the sufficiency of His atonement resulting therefrom, the constant and prevalent intercession of Christ, justification by faith in His atoning blood, the new birth, the enlightening, renewing, sanctifying influences of God the Holy Ghost—these cardinal points, I appeal to you, have never been omitted in any sermon he has preached within these walls down to the very last. He has been to his people's delight, emphatically, a preacher—not a *reader*. His eye, keen and piercing, as you know, has entered into the inmost soul, and signified to many a hearer, 'Thou art the man;' while his pointed and powerful and personal appeals in a voice—occasionally of thunder—have aroused and arrested the sinner's attention; and we have seen multitudes pricked to the heart, and brought to consideration and prayer and faith, as the consequence. It could never be said of one of his sermons preached here, that it was 'like a letter without a direction.'

"He has been, as you may suppose, a very successful preacher. *One thousand nine hundred and twenty-nine* new members have been added to the church during the pastorate of Dr. Leifchild, *three hundred and ten* of whom have been from other churches, and *one thousand five hundred and fifty-nine*, we have reason to hope, have either been born again or brought to decision under his faithful
Many, very many of these have fallen asleep, but they

have died in the faith; and, as the Doctor told us last Lord's-day morning, the happy deaths of his people have been a comfort and joy to him. So far as my experience goes, I have never visited the dying bed of a member without having witnessed some token for good, without hearing some cheering word as to the future prospect, and some grateful word as to the past privileges which they had enjoyed; and, generally, all has been concluded with a grateful recollection of the faithfulness and power of our minister, and a prayer to God for a blessing to follow him still.

"He ever insisted on the absolute necessity of good works to justify our faith, both to ourselves and others; and by good works, as you are aware, he let us very plainly know that he did not mean merely abstaining from sin and worldly conformity, or even the cultivation of spiritual mindedness, or the passive virtues, but constant, active effort and personal sacrifice to promote the cause of Christ. To help his people in this way he has been most laborious in originating, organizing, and sustaining Societies and schemes of usefulness as fields for the exercise of their talents and zeal, and many have reason to be thankful to him for having taught them how to work. They have found the service of Christ perfect freedom, and look back upon the past with a recollection that though they were once cumberers of the ground, and then were like unskilled labourers standing all the day idle; under his teaching they were provided with suitable means of employment, and have, in some measure, been enabled to serve their generation according to the will of God. How fertile has been his imagination, and how laborious and successful his efforts in this way, may be judged of by the fact that there are now connected with this chapel no less than *fourteen* Societies in active and constant operation. One of these, 'The Christian Instruction Society,' has about *one hundred members* of the church going from house to house every Lord's day, visiting about one thousand families, or between four and five thousand persons; and a missionary is kept at the expense of this church for the purpose of following up the visitations of the gratuitous agents, in the week. I cannot, I ought not to detain you by enumerating these Societies; you may judge of their magnitude and importance, and of their extensive usefulness, when I tell you that including the debt of the chapel, which has been paid off since Dr. Leifchild has been the pastor, as you have been informed, to the amount of seven thousand pounds, I calculate there must have been more than *seventy thousand pounds* raised during his pastorate for the support of the ministry

here; for the support of foreign and home missions, the Christian Instruction Society, Bible Society, Tract Society, the Society for the Jews, Benevolent and other Societies, which I cannot remember; including also schools for the education of children, and other means for ameliorating the condition, temporal and spiritual, of our fellow-men around us, through the country, and through the world."

The address of Dr. Leifchild himself referred so fully and specially to his ministry in the chapel he was now quitting, that it must be appended:—

The Rev. Dr. Leifchild then rose and said: "I am almost overcome, as you may well suppose, with the emotions that have been excited in me by the observations made, and the addresses delivered, particularly the last address, in the name of the officers and members of this church, on the occasion of this my resignation of the pastorate in this place—emotions heightened still more by the proposal of a testimonial so far beyond my deserts and my expectations.

"I hardly dare trust myself to dwell upon the particulars of my pastorate here. I am compelled, however, for a few moments, to go back to my entrance upon it; and I confess that I now wonder at my temerity in accepting, nearly a quarter of a century ago, the call to it; for, as you have heard, I was then upwards of fifty years of age, and labouring among a devotedly-attached people, with the prospect of future usefulness and prosperity, and not a cloud to darken that prospect. For twelve long months I sought with prayerful anxiety the intimations of His will whose I am and whom I serve; and, being satisfied that I had received them, I hesitated not to obey the call, consulting not with flesh and blood, but committing myself to His care and succour who had never failed nor forsaken me. How I have been helped and strengthened and comforted by Him here, my heart can feel, but my tongue cannot tell. Oh, with what delight have I looked upon the crowds here listening to the truths of the Gospel from my lips, and proving, in not a few instances, that it was the power of God to their salvation! 'Not I, but the grace of God that was with me.' That grace has ever been sufficient for me, and the strength of Christ has been made perfect in my weakness.

"The officers of this church have yielded me the warmest affection and the most cordial support. Those of them who have gone

to their rest and reward were a pattern to all in that office; and their memory is blessed. Of those who have succeeded to them, more than one or two are present, who have been with me from the beginning; and you can tell, dear brethren, how, by the combination of our energies and counsels, with the blessing of the Almighty, we have been enabled to meet the difficulties unavoidable in the government of so large a body of people, so as to preserve all in peace, order, harmony, and efficiency. I gave a motto to this church on my taking the oversight of it, under the influence of which you have acted up to this day. It is the inspired injunction contained in the prophecies of Zechariah—'Love the truth and peace.' On only one occasion during the whole of my pastorate has that peace been interrupted for a short season. Some departed from us, with the view of finding a church more agreeable, as they conceived, to the New Testament order; but that departure, according to their repeated assurances to myself, involved no decay of their attachment to me, or their approbation of my ministerial labours. It has been a great satisfaction to me, on a grave and serious review of the subjects of my ministry, in connexion with the New Testament, as my knowledge of its contents increased, and my sphere of observation and experience enlarged, to find that I had nothing to retract, nothing but what I had to repeat again and again, with variety only in illustration and dress. The substantial and essential features, which never grow old with age, nor lose their vigour with time, remained unaltered. To me it is a new Gospel to this hour, for its freshness and its beauty; and it brightens upon me the more as I draw towards the close of my mortal journey. I have not served you, the people of my charge, as I wished to do; but I can honestly say that I have done my best. *I never once, through the whole of those three-and-twenty years, preached an unstudied sermon in that pulpit, though this has often cost me sleepless Saturday nights, and made me feel the ministry to be indeed the 'burden of the Lord.'*

"What do I owe to the co-operation of the members of those numerous Societies that have been formed in this place? How often have I been disposed to say with the apostle to the Philipians, 'Help those women which have laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the Book of Life;' that is, as I understand it, with distinctness and emphasis, 'These are they who have been a comfort unto me.'

"It has been my delight, as you have been told already, from the first, to fraternise with members and ministers of different denomi-

nations; but I need not go further into that subject than just to advert to what has been stated, that a meeting of such persons was held here on the first day of the new year in 1843, so hallowed and so blessed as to lead on to the formation of the Evangelical Alliance. This association has already proved how admirably adapted it is to meet the existing state of the church, by assisting it with advice and pecuniary aid against the assaults of its enemies, at home and abroad. Some of the dear brethren who officiated in that never-to-be-forgotten service are here present. One is gone home,—the late lamented Dr. Cox; and I regret that his place is not to be supplied this day by my rev. friend and brother, the pastor of Bloomsbury Chapel; but another dear brother of the same denomination, who is well known in this place, and has often ministered here with great acceptance and profit to the people, has kindly consented to take his place, and to say to you a few words. You have seen how advanced years rendered me unable to discharge all the duties of the pastorate efficiently; therefore, I sought with you the aid of a co-pastorate. That, however, failed; but, according to the assurances of the individuals associated with me in that office, from no cause in myself. Both of them are labouring in neighbouring spheres of great usefulness, and I pray God abundantly to bless their labours. One of them, who would gladly have been with us to-day, and whom, I know, you would all have been glad to see, is now in a foreign country, for his health, and the recruiting of his spirits. But you, my beloved people, were steadfast in your unabated attachment to my ministry; and therefore I continued it, until I found it impossible to do justice to its claims, and felt compelled, therefore, to relinquish my post, while the congregation is in a sound and healthy state, in the hope that God may raise up some individual to carry on all with greater vigour and efficiency than has yet been known.

“What thanks are due from me to the Author of my being, for an almost uninterrupted continuance of a large share of health and spirits. I have not been laid aside very often from my work, and even when weakened, have been speedily recruited. But it is the law of our nature to decay by time. Our spiritual strength, indeed, may be on the increase up to the last hour of life, but in our physical nature we can never hope to renew our youth like the eagle's. It was in my heart to live and to die among this people; but I bow to His decree that renders it vain to strive against the law of my being. I put off the armour at His bidding, at whose command I put it on, and by whose help I have worn and wielded it in fighting the battles

of the Lord. I shall not, indeed, quit the ministry ; but as long as I am able, in whatever place, preach Christ. Yet I must now resign my pastorate into the hands of those from whom I received it, with the testimony of my own conscience, that, in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have had my conversation in the world, and more especially to you-ward. It is not, indeed, a correct course alone that is sufficient to shield us from the shafts of calumny ; the most blameless men have sometimes suffered from that quarter ; and I am confident that all of us would thus suffer from the malice of Satan against every zealous opposer of his kingdom, but for the protecting and sheltering care of Divine Providence. To that I owe it that the breath of slander has not been permitted to taint my name. But I remember that I am still in the body, and that, without incessant watchfulness, I may yet go out of life with a stain ; but I trust in Him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. And, oh, let me bespeak for this dear people an interest in your prayers who are not attendants at this place of worship ! We have been disappointed in one as my successor, who bade fair to enable me to leave the place with a confident expectation of its increase in numbers, and in vigour, and efficiency, and prosperity ; but God is able to raise up others. With Him is the residue of the Spirit ; He who holds the stars in His hand, can replenish the firmament of His church with new ones as the old disappear ; He can, as you have all been reminded, imbue with a double portion of His Spirit the youthful successor of the elder prophet, and raise up a Paul in the place of him who departed, saying, ' Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' To Him I commit this church ; and while I have breath, my soul shall pray for this people. I thank you, my beloved coadjutors, for all your care of me, and sympathy with me on all occasions, and especially for your sympathy with my dear and faithful wife, the object of the affections of so many of you, in her recent alarming illness, and for your united affection towards my only and beloved son, whom you have rejoiced to see treading in the steps of your own pastor. I thank you ; but you will have a reward which I cannot give ; and God Almighty grant that as long as you are spared to be connected with this place, you may receive a large effusion of those divine blessings which we have already enjoyed. I commend you, my beloved friends, to God, and to the word of His grace, and say unto you, ' Finally, brethren, farewell.'"

A more interesting and affecting service has seldom been held in any place of worship, as indeed may be inferred from the simple fact that no appearance of weariness appeared upon the countenance of any one of the whole congregation then present. The interest was sustained for no less than four hours and a-half, namely, from eleven to half-past three o'clock.

Nor was this all; for in the evening of the same day a public dinner was given to Dr. Leifchild at Freemasons' Hall, where a large company, including many ministerial brethren, two members of parliament, and several influential laymen assembled on the occasion of presenting him with a public testimonial.

The speeches delivered during the evening by some of the gentlemen present were quite in harmony with, though freer than the formal addresses of the morning service.

The only one to which much interest now attaches, is that of the chief personage, whom his friends had thus delighted to honour. For the introduction of this no apology is necessary.

Dr. Leifchild rose, amid loud and repeated cheering, the company rising simultaneously from their seats, and said :—

“Sir, I am filled with surprise at the scene before me. Little did I expect, when I announced my intention to retire from the pastorate, that it would lead to such a meeting as the present. I could not have supposed that such an event would have awakened any interest beyond the circle of my own immediate friends and congregation. I might perhaps have expected some little testimonial from them; but that it should come from others in different parts of the country, and of different denominations, in the way that has been mentioned, is what I could not possibly have anticipated. It must, therefore, be the result of the impulses of their own generous minds. Indeed, it is but of late that I was aware of this movement taking place, and I do not even yet know the names of my friends; but I hope I shall know them, that I may remember them in my prayers; and I therefore value this thing the more for the spontaneous manner in which it has been done. Give me leave to say, that the value of the testimonial which may be given to me, is greatly enhanced by the kind, the considerate, and the delicate manner in which the whole arrangement has been effected.

"But I cannot conceal from myself, that this is a homage paid rather to certain principles through me—of which I am considered to be one of the representatives, than to myself in person; and I rejoice in it more on that account than on my own. What a lesson will this afford to the country on the efficiency of the voluntary principle! In what a different light would this testimonial, which is to be presented to me, have appeared, if it had occurred in the shape of tithes! The spontaneity of the act gives it a grace in my esteem which adds exceedingly to its value. A good deal is said about the niggardliness of Dissenters, and their want of liberality to their teachers. This testimonial will tell a different tale.

"Then, again, what an encouragement will it afford to my younger brethren in the ministry! They will learn from this, that great talents are not necessary to secure the esteem and the approbation of some of the best portion of mankind; but that a patient course of doing right is sufficient. I have made no pretensions to learning, to genius, to eloquence, to authorship; I have never distinguished myself by any brilliant and splendid efforts on extraordinary occasions. Indeed, Sir, I was incapable of ever so distinguishing myself, simply because, on every occasion of public service to which I have been called, I have thrown my whole soul into it, and done my best, and therefore I could not, at any time, do better. But I have read somewhere this sentence,—'A man is not to be judged of by his extraordinary efforts, but by his ordinary doings;' and my younger brethren will learn from this day's proceedings, that a faithful, earnest, diligent, and persevering preaching of the Gospel for a course of years, without turning either to the right hand or to the left, will receive its meed of approbation, even in this world, from those whose praise is always a high honour. And will it not also encourage them in the cultivation of catholicity of spirit, in connection with a firm and steady maintenance of distinctive principles? I have never been ashamed of my attachment to the religious principles of the body to which I belong. I have never hesitated to enforce these principles when circumstances required it; sometimes, indeed, as in a case at Bristol, to my own personal danger; but I have also loved to fraternize with all good men. I have shut up myself in no party, and shut out no party from me, that was willing to receive my service. I have been as much at home among Wesleyans, among Baptists, among Presbyterians, among Moravians, aye, and among Episcopalians, as among the members of my own

denomination. And my brethren may learn that by such a course, without the compromise of any one principle, they will obtain the approbation of the wise and good, not of one party only, but of all parties. The presence of so many of the Christian laity, and of my respected brethren of different sections of the church, will show them that this course is sufficient to secure the esteem of the wise and good among all. My motto has always been, and always shall be, 'Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, although they follow not with us.'

" Sir, I thank all those dear brethren in the ministry who have done me the kindness and the honour to assemble in such numbers this day. I have not, my dear brethren, been able to attend all your meetings for the advancement of the general cause, from the pressure of my pastoral engagements. But I have been present with you in spirit, joying, and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. There exists no shyness between me and any one of your number. I love you all in the truth, and for the truth's sake. So long as I live, should it be for many years, I shall never forget the solemn, chastened, and delightful service of this morning, with the exception of too much being said about myself. But that those dear brethren who then spoke to us did so in the sincerity of their hearts, I know, from a long and close acquaintance with them. The hallowed feeling of that service will remain, I am persuaded, for a long time on the minds of those who attended it. I thank you for your sympathy with me on every occasion, and for your fraternal regard to me in all my intercourse with you during my residence in the Metropolis. But my ministry belongs to the past. It is a ministry over which the shadows of evening are gathering. The old men are going from you, and a new race is coming on the stage, with a style of address better fitted to the taste of the times that are coming upon us. I rejoice, however, in the conviction that such is the case. Only I hope, that with a new style of address, they will teach the old truths. Let those truths never be left in the back-ground. For more than fifty years I have preached the Gospel of Christ, and I can now testify to my brethren who are coming after me, that I have found that Gospel, though always substantially the same, susceptible of indefinite illustration, and of being made perpetually new and interesting. May those of my younger brethren who are coming after me, preach a full-orbed Gospel, with Christ in the centre! Him first, Him last, Him midst, and without end.

" Oh, Sir, in what different circumstances might I have appeared before you this evening. I might have been decrepid with age, but my eye is not dim, nor is my natural strength much abated. I might have been dismissed from my church. But I tear myself from them simply from a consciousness of being unable to do justice to their claims. I might have left behind a weak and divided people ; but they are in a state of harmony and efficiency. My love to them is not diminished, and I believe their love to me in no single instance has diminished either. I consulted their interests more than my own in the step I have taken. They are left in a condition to warrant the man who succeeds me to hope to raise them to a higher degree than ever in Christian knowledge, benevolence, and zeal. I have felt it painful all through this day to speak so much about myself, as if I were anything but what God has been pleased to make me, and to do by me. No, Sir,—not merit, but mercy ; not goodness, but grace ; not man, but God !"

In the speeches that followed, many pleasing testimonies were borne to Dr. Leifchild's abilities and usefulness. Mr. Binney remarked :—

" I have looked at Dr. Leifchild with amazement when he has stood upon the platform, and spoken with such feeling and force, and I have said, ' I wish I could do that ;' but still, every man has his particular gift of God. If men look up to Dr. Leifchild as a model, and will use that model rightly, like our friend Mr. Brock, it is well."

Mr. George Hitchcock, a well-known layman, observed :—

" That he has been kept to the present hour is a cause of thankfulness to this assembly—those who belong to his denomination. Mr. Binney said that his own body rejoiced at it. I would go further, and say the whole church of Christ feel interested in his welfare. Episcopalians who are evangelicals, as well as Dissenters, look on Dr. Leifchild as a child of God—one with whom they may hope to spend eternity, where neither Dissent nor Church will be any more known. You make a great mistake if you think Church people look at Dissenters in the way that some of you may imagine. If they read their Bible, they look on Dissenters—if

they are walking humbly, seeking to please God, and according to the dictates of His word—as fellow-heirs with them of the precious promises which are laid up for them.”

The same speaker referred to a characteristic fact :—

“There is one circumstance that I will mention to his credit ; namely, that our dear friend is the only minister who ever spoke to me in an omnibus about my soul. It shows what the man was about. He has said in the course of his address that he always did his best. It is well for a man to do his best on all occasions ; and the man who serves his God will seek to serve Him all day long. The minister and the layman will both say, ‘What can I do to promote the spiritual interests of this person ?’ That is the Christianity of the Bible. When I saw our friend in an omnibus, he began to talk to me about some scriptural doctrine. I saw the state of his mind and his heart towards me, and I honoured and loved him for it. Depend upon it that everybody likes to be dealt with faithfully. I am glad to see you all to-night, and there are hundreds of Episcopalians who, if they could have been present, would have been here to express their sympathy with you, dear Dr. Leifchild.”

On June the 12th, in pursuance of the purpose and promise of that evening assembly, a deputation waited on Dr. Leifchild, and delivered the destined testimonial, together with an accompanying address, as here annexed :—

“The members of the church and congregation at Craven Chapel, with members of other churches of the Independent denomination, and also those Christian friends connected with Baptist, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, United Brethren, and other churches, whose names are under-written, have the highest gratification in presenting to the Rev. John Leifchild, D.D., Two THOUSAND GUINEAS, on his retirement from the pastorate at Craven Chapel, as a testimonial of the great Christian affection with which they regard him personally, and in token of their admiration of his unwearied exertions, through a long life, to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, not only by an earnest and faithful ministry of the Gospel of the grace of God, but also by public and private efforts to sustain, in a truly catholic spirit, all institutions, founded on evangelical principles, for promoting that object, both at home and abroad.”

A beautiful little token of regard was also presented to him, with the following touching memorial, from the children of his Sabbath schools:—

"DEAR AND REVEREND SIR,— We, part of the children of Craven Chapel Sabbath schools, having with deep interest listened to your affectionate but solemn farewell, and hearing the church and congregation are about to present you a testimonial as proof of their attachment to you and gratitude for your past services, beg your acceptance of the enclosed * from us, which, though very inadequate as a gift, is the free-will offering of most of the scholars; accept it, dear Dr. Leifchild, with the most sincere affection of —

"*Per* Mr. GEORGE WILSON, *May 2nd*, 1854.

"*From Craven Chapel Sabbath Schools.*"

E. Swaine, Esq., another of the senior deacons, then read, on behalf of the Ladies' Deputation present, the address to Mrs. Leifchild, which had been read to her publicly at the evening meeting at Freemasons' Hall.

"The female members of the church, and other friends, are desirous of showing their esteem and love for Mrs. Leifchild at parting, and regret that it is not in their power to make her a costly offering. Nevertheless, they hope she will appreciate the motive which prompts them, in some, though a very inadequate way, to express the sense they entertain of her many female virtues and excellences. She has been the attentive, dutiful, affectionate, and faithful wife of their pastor; and how much of his usefulness may be traced to her kind and judicious care of him, and management of his domestic comforts, they cannot tell. She has been a truly pious, judicious, and sincere friend to a large circle of females, ever ready to throw the mantle of love over failings, and to assist, by her counsel, her exertions, or her prayers, those who needed help in the hour of their perplexity or sorrow; but above all, and beyond all, she has been the watchful, unwearied, unostentatious, kind-hearted helper and advocate of the poor. It has been sufficient for her to know or hear that a poor member of her own sex was in

* A morocco case, containing an elegant Gold Pencil, with the words engraved upon it—"FROM CRAVEN SABBATH SCHOOLS."

trouble, for her to forsake all other pursuits, and personally visit the abode of the perplexed, the destitute, the bereaved, or the sick, and there to pour in the balm of consolation, to lend the helping hand, or to seek out suitable relief. In some instances, known to us, such cases have been tended by her patiently, affectionately, and with unwearied solicitude, not for days or weeks, or months merely, but for years, and never left until the subjects were beyond the reach of human sympathy. If to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction be a part of pure religion, then she has been religious in an eminent degree.

"When she was herself recently laid on the couch of sickness and pain, the church felt justified in praying that the Lord would hear in the day of her trouble, and make all her bed in her sickness, because she had considered the poor, and had pity on him, and delivered him in the day of his adversity; and the Lord graciously heard that prayer of the church on her behalf, and raised her up, to be the comfort of her partner, and the joy of his people.

"May she still be spared to cheer and bless him, and when he, like a fine setting sun, shall have finished his course, and set in glory, may she also depart hence only to rise with him in another hemisphere, where they both shall shine as stars in the firmament for ever and ever, to the glory of His grace who made her what she has been."

The Ladies' Deputation then presented her with the sum of ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY POUNDS, expressing the affection and interest felt in her by themselves, and those whom they represented, and assuring her of their continued remembrance, both of herself and their beloved pastor, during the yet remaining period of their lives.

CHAPTER VI.

The Brighton Period.

(FROM 1854 TO 1856.)

THUS honourably closed the regular ministry and settled pastorate of Dr. Leifchild. Thus liberally and spontaneously did some of his principal friends mark their esteem of his public labours and private character. He might now have retired from all preaching, and, as some of his friends advised, passed the remainder of his life in rural seclusion and peaceful idleness. He had certainly done enough professional work to entitle him to leisure, and had received enough commendation to satisfy any minister's honourable ambition.

But he was not the man to retire while he could serve his Lord, nor was he the man to enjoy rural seclusion. The happiness of some would have been his wretchedness. He had no taste for bucolic blessedness, he had no love for agriculture. Instead of green fields and golden crops, give him men, women, and children; instead of quiet villages, give him busy towns.

When, therefore, overtures were made to him to take charge for a time of a new and costly chapel which was in course of erection at Brighton, he was not indisposed to the undertaking; not, indeed, dreaming of the heavy duties and the incessant toils which he was thus about to take upon himself. He thought he could serve his Master, honour His name, proclaim His Gospel, and give an impulse to a new and important movement. Therefore he consented to leave London and abide at Brighton.

Here his own account of his movements may be introduced:—

“Some time was occupied in paying farewell visits to my friends, and preparatory visits to Brighton to obtain a suitable residence. We fixed upon one in Powis-square, because it was large and airy, things which Mrs. Leifchild particularly desired, and it was my delight to please her. Before removing, however, I consented to preach at the Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapel in Tunbridge Wells, and at the minister’s house I spent the Sunday.

“On proceeding the next day (August 7th) to Brighton, *via* Reigate, I was mercifully rescued from imminent danger. The ‘down train’ arrived about one o’clock. Several passengers to Brighton were awaiting it, and but two porters were at hand to assist in getting them and their luggage into the carriages. I saw there was room in one carriage, and having opened the door, hastened towards it with a large black bag in my hand. Just at that moment the train moved backwards, and, as I was then holding the handle of the door, drew me with it. I almost immediately fell over a large bag which was lying in the way, and my right arm was within an inch of going down between the carriage wheels and the pavement. Some people seeing my danger ran to me and violently pulled me up. I had been stunned by the fall, had bruised a limb, and felt much shaken. But I lifted up my heart to God in thankfulness to Him as my gracious preserver, interpreting my preservation as a sign that He still had something for me to do in His service.

“We arrived in Brighton and took up our abode in Powis-square on the last day in August. The new chapel in Queen-square was to have been opened in that month, but was still in a most unfinished state. Although not opened till October 12th, it was even then in a very unsatisfactory condition. No provision had been made for warming the place, and the approaches to it were left in a miry state. A prejudice against the new

interest was felt by some parties, and everything wore an unfavourable aspect. Much care devolved upon me for particular objects which I had never anticipated."

It is needless, however, to quote complaints about a state of affairs long since remedied, and it is of little present moment to explain how prejudices arose with the building, and how ecclesiastical peace was not promoted even by the appearance of its pretty pinnacles. Nor need it now be explained how, while the exterior was classically correct, the interior was excessively cold. Approaching winter was indeed a time of persecution in that high-roofed chapel without artificial heat. The theory seemed to be that our hearts should be fired by fraternal love, but without other fire than this we found the theory inoperative. Perhaps we had much love, but then we had no stove; much charity, but no coal. Friends shook hands after the service who shook all over before; and my poor mother, who had just returned to us from the very gates of death, thought she had gone back again whenever she entered the doors of that chilly chapel.

As to her husband, he contrived to warm himself with his subject. Happily he communicated truth, unhappily he could not communicate caloric. People came and shivered in the chapel as if at Nova Zembla, yet they continued to come, and the preacher was encouraged.

It was, indeed, wonderful that so old a man should strive so manfully against hindrances and animosities of all kinds, and with considerable success. "The attendants," says he, "continued to increase in number every Sabbath-day. Several sittings were taken, and by great attention to the singing, which was always an object of concern to me, we were very successful, and all doubt of the prospects of the new undertaking vanished."

This year of ministrations was indeed a year out of an old man's life, but yet neither unwelcome nor ineffective. Old friends whom he had not seen for many years came and heard him, and con-

versed with him. The chapel was new, but the congregation was sometimes partly old. London yielded its frequent tribute, Bristol was not without an occasional representative, and even old Kensington added a feeble remnant of an early harvest. Thus the old minister was now and then surrounded by old friends. In the chapel they were seen like snow patches on green mountains; in the vestry they clustered round one as old as themselves. His voice was to them like the remembered sound of sea-waves. Once, indeed, they had listened to him in the very tempest of his impassioned manhood. Now they listened to him as to the peaceful murmurs of spent billows on a smooth shore. Low and lulled as the sound now was, it was still musical—more musical perhaps than before, being more expressive of the nearly accomplished purposes of life. What he had once been his aged friends well recollected. What they were all about to become he could well describe—describe, indeed, better now, than when in long preceding years they all had life in common before them, and heaven was only “the land that is very far off.”

Next to his ministry, the great aim of his life and the cherished purpose of his heart was sure to make itself manifest at Brighton. Let us hear his own account of it:—

“My great object was to promote Christian and ministerial union, in which I found the town was very deficient. I established a fraternal meeting of the ministers of different denominations in the town and neighbourhood, to assemble in the vestry of my chapel on the first Monday morning of every month. Out of this arose a public united prayer-meeting at Hanover Chapel on the Fast-day, March 21, 1855, at which I presided. The chapel was filled with devout attendants, and it was a time of repentance, humiliation, and self-dedication, never to be forgotten.

“From this also sprang up a united monthly prayer-meeting at the different dissenting places of worship. The first address

was given by me, at the Wesleyan chapel, Dorset-gardens, and the last also by me at Mr. Sortain's chapel, just before I resigned my ministerial engagement at Brighton. After this, although the people never failed us, and ever showed their delight in these meetings, they were discontinued, and no one attempted to revive them."

His Brighton public year was undoubtedly one of blessing and usefulness. A flourishing cause was established, a new congregation associated together, and an impulse communicated to evangelical dissent in that town, which it has not since lost, and which will, in all probability, be permanent and progressive. It was not indeed dissent, but piety, that my father aimed to promote, and this aim was so palpable and pleasing to several devout persons of other connexions, that they often attended his ministry, though averse to his denominational principles. Indeed, this aged "Unionist," to employ a common term in its highest application, was the beloved of all liberal and loving Christians, and when strangers came to hear him and to know him, they expressed their surprise that he said nothing of dissent, and preached nothing but Christ and Christian brotherhood.

Some of his friends at Craven Chapel were anxious that their late beloved pastor should revisit them and the scene of his relinquished labours. He therefore paid them a visit on the 15th March, 1855. What kind of reception he then and there experienced, appears in the following extract from a journal of the time:—

"On Thursday, the 15th inst., the venerable Dr. Leifchild visited Craven Chapel, for the first time since he resigned the pastorate. He had been solicited for some time past to come to town to preside at the anniversary meetings of some of the Societies he had formed many years since. He pleaded, however, that the excitement would be too great for him, and wished to decline the invitation. After much solicitation he consented to meet the members and friends of the Christian Instruction Society at their annual tea-meeting, and to preach on behalf of the Society on the following Lord's-day morn-

ing. The friends at Craven determined to give him a good reception. They decorated the walls of the school-room with drapery and festoons of flowers, and over the platform they had wreaths of foliage, very beautifully arranged, so as to form the word 'Welcome,' over a portrait of the Doctor. The rooms were brilliantly lighted by a profusion of new gas-lights, and the *coup d'œil* delighted the Doctor and all the visitors.

"When the Doctor entered the rooms, accompanied by the deacons and other attached friends, all the meeting rose and sang a hymn of welcome, which had been prepared and printed for the occasion.

"The multitude of friends who crowded the capacious school-rooms having partaken of an excellent tea, Dr. Leifchild, Rev. W. Spencer Edwards, Mr. Pittman, the Secretary of the Parent Society, all the Deacons of Craven Chapel, with the Treasurer, Superintendent, Secretaries, &c., of the Society, ascended the platform, and commenced the business of the evening by singing; after which, Edward Swaine, Esq., offered prayer.

"Dr. Leifchild, who had been most enthusiastically received, addressed the meeting with all the energy and beauty and pathos of former days. He alluded to the happiness it had given him to hear of their constancy and union and continued zeal, since he had left them, showing that they were not actuated by mere impulse, but by principle; and that the truths he had preached to them had come, not in word only, but in power, and with the demonstration of the Spirit. He depicted the leadings of Providence, which caused him to visit Brighton, with a view to Mrs. Leifchild's recovery from severe illness. How he had been solicited there to take charge for a time of the new chapel, which was then building, and his reluctance to undertake the task. Mrs. Leifchild's health having recovered so far that she was anxious to continue there, he had been induced for a short time to do what he could to make way for a young pastor. He had preached three sermons, which the company he then addressed had heard, but which were considered to have been improved because he had shortened them. He spoke of the success which had attended him there, though the ministers of Brighton prognosticated he would never get a congregation. He told several interesting stories, and enchaind the attention of the large auditory for nearly an hour."

A private letter from one of the members of Craven Chapel gives a yet more glowing description of Dr. Leifchild's reception;

at the same time it is more familiar, as one passage will prove :—
“The Doctor was quite surrounded by his old friends. I think he must have been tired of shaking hands with them. He is to baptize their children next Sabbath morning. Mr. Wilson says they have restricted the number of infants to *two dozen*.”

Before his year of duty at the new Brighton chapel had expired, he had privately resolved not to enter upon another year under the existing management ; and, indeed, his engagement had merely been for one year. When he publicly announced his intention to resign, he stated the reasons which led him so to do. One of those who sat and by mechanical appliances heard this announcement, was the one of all others for whose health's sake he had consented to abide at Brighton—his aged and ailing wife. Much as she disliked moving, she acquiesced in his determination to go hence, but almost immediately afterwards she herself was called upon to take a longer journey, and to make her last remove. The summons to another world had been long expected, yet it was singular that she lingered out the whole period of her husband's ministerial engagement, and it was pleasing to her that Providence had granted her prayer that husband and son should both be with her at her departure. The three were together at last, and to the last united. When her husband left the chapel she left the world.

A windy night was that one. in December, 1855, when we were watching in a loftily-situated room, exposed to the loud blast as it flapped its beating wings against the shaking windows. Hour after hour of gusty darkness went slowly away, and still the doubtful life of the long-loved one hung fluttering over the gulf that separates two worlds. We felt that this night would probably be her last, and accordingly we were anxious watchers through its weary hours. There were moments, indeed, in which she appeared to revive, and then she would give minute directions about her poor dependents in the neighbourhood, to whose wants she had carefully ministered, and who now (un-

worthy as they afterwards proved) lay very near that heart whose beatings were soon about to cease for ever.

Quite calmly did she speak of ordinary and household affairs, and quite characteristically about particular persons. She had no dread of death, and no fears about departure. She had often been more troubled in going out of town than she now was in going out of the world. Her anxiety about herself was far less than ours about her. *We* alone seemed to dread that loss which to her was gain. She alone was easy while we were agitated. Her expressions concerning religious matters were few and simple. She avowed her confident reliance upon her Redeemer, and her last words were merely these:—"He will not leave me. O receive my soul at last." This peaceful frame of mind, this calm death, was a striking contrast to the disturbance of the elements without. While her soul was thus quietly passing away, the furious winds were still flapping their restless wings against the windows, and the sounds of the neighbouring sea came up into the sick chamber muffled in the folds of the whistling blast.

While she was feebly uttering the above-mentioned words, her husband flung himself upon her bed in an agony of grief. One distinct sentence alone escaped his lips, and it was this: "I shall not be long after you." With this he said his utmost; she had already said her last. The spirit of a true woman and a devoted wife was launched upon the ocean of eternity, while that visible ocean without, that broad ocean which is the nearest emblem of the illimitable, still loaded the shrieking gale with its fitful burden of despair. Wild nature seemed to raise a dirge for her, and wild nature sustained that funeral dirge while we two were mute in the silent chamber of death.

It was a melancholy day when we attended my mother's remains to a grave in the Brighton Cemetery. There was much weeping and much sorrow, for even by her brief sojourn of one year the departed lady had endeared her name and brought mourners to her tomb. Afterwards the chief mourner wrote:—

“The numerous letters of condolence which I received did but little to abate my deep grief. I received seventy-two letters of this kind, some of them beautifully written, but they only opened the wound afresh by the expression of sympathy, and I was able to answer but very few.”

The aged widower's grief for his aged wife (she being 77 years of age at her departure) may appear somewhat out of proportion to those who knew them not. But to those who beheld the two in the time of their decline and decay, nothing was more touching than to observe, that while both of them retained for their years remarkable physical and mental activity, both of them likewise preserved unusual and undecaying affection. Love—true love for each other—first united them. Love to God sustained them in trials, difficulties mutually endeared them, and even death itself seemed long reluctant to dissociate them. When my father had nothing but her memory to cherish, he cherished and honoured it to the day of his own death. Her son, also, had his own filial sorrow, and the words in which it found expression may not inappropriately close this chapter:—

O my beloved mother,
My heart laments for thee;
For never can another
Be what thou wert to me.

One only star at dawning
Lifts her lone lamp on high,
More loved by me than morning,
With all its brilliancy.

One only star at even
Shows presage of the night;
Yet from its orb is given
A soft and yearning light.

Not all the stars that follow
The fading of the sun,
And gem the ærial hollow,
Are welcome as that one.

So thou to me wert dearer
Than any one beside;
In dawning life far nearer,
In manhood all my pride.

And even in life maturer
My heart to thee was true;
No other bond was surer,
Though other bonds were new.

Then can this sweet relation
Best image the divine,
Yet mar our expectation
Beyond earth's shadowy line?

Can all its depths unsounded
Be altogether lost—
By mortal being bounded,
By death for ever cross'd?

If earlier far and longer
Than any other love,
Than death it must be stronger,
And still survive above.

A love so much enduring,
Heedless of self and pain,
Has something re-assuring
Of power and life again.

Ah! surely the beginning
Alone is granted here,
And in a world unsinning,
Unsullied with a tear,

Its fulness will be measured
By some angelic tie;
For love so deeply treasured
Can surely never die.

CHAPTER VII.

The Second London Period.

(FROM 1856 TO HIS DEATH.)

RELINQUISHING public work in Brighton, and regretting his irreparable private loss, Dr. Leifchild resolved to quit the town. To London he removed once more. Thither went the old man, the old furniture, and the old books, and there again were heard some of the old sermons, as well as some new ones. He sought a house and found one; and when the landlord met him to arrange terms, he exclaimed, "You, Dr. Leifchild, were the man to save me from infidelity. Many years ago I heard you at Craven Chapel. I was then on the very brink of infidelity, and your sermon rescued me." In that house near Primrose-hill and the Regent's-park the retired veteran now took up his abode. It was his last earthly house, and from that he was removed only to "a house not made with hands."

His thoughts alone returned to Brighton, for I do not remember that he ever visited it again in person. The grave in its Cemetery still lingered in his memory, and with a strong but strange affection he demanded the removal from it of the corpse of his buried wife to a tomb which he purchased in the suburban cemetery at Abney Park. They two had lived together so long that they ought, in his opinion, to lie together at last. Nothing but an official and absolute refusal of the transference prevented it. In earth their bodies now moulder apart, yet who can doubt that in paradise their spirits consort in holy union!

He had not come to London again merely to rest. So soon as he recovered his health, and so long as he retained his faculties, there was work for him, and work of an honourable and acceptable character. The chain of public engagements was not broken by his resignation at Brighton, but other links of it were taken up in London. Hear his own account of the first important duty he now undertook, and also of the second :—

“ I had been applied to, while at Brighton, to give the Inaugural Address at the new Baptist College in the Regent's Park (formerly Mr. Holford's house). This I did in October, and my address gave great satisfaction. I was requested to print it, and on consenting to do this, I was advised by some friends to append observations on preachers and preaching. I had some doubt about this, but at last, feeling that I had not long to stay upon earth, I exerted myself and finished the performance.

“ Towards the close of this year I preached, at the request of the minister, the first of the sermons on Whitfield's centenary, at Tottenham-court-road Chapel. The congregation and collection was good, and the whole was a gracious season. My brother and his family were present. The services will be published.”

In June, 1857, Dr. Leifchild left London for Paris. Restless at home, he thought that he might find entertainment and health in the gay capital of France, even though he did not mingle in its gaieties. It was also his desire to amuse and invigorate a female relative who accompanied him.

In Paris he enjoyed himself as once aforetime. He was still a curious and an eager sight-seer, and, as ever, delighted with pictures. In the Louvre he spent several hours; in the Luxembourg gallery he also recreated himself. Pictures to his taste and to his heart's content hung grandly and abundantly before him, and even at gaudy Versailles he found some paintings to please him in the rare interspaces between battle-fields and scenes of slaughter. In the Bois de Boulogne, or in the Jardin des Plantes, or in the gardens of the Luxembourg, he amused himself almost

daily, and would have conversed with every pretty child he saw, had not the unfortunate French language restricted him to looks of love and gestures of tenderness.

His old friend and former disciple, the Rev. John Shedlock, was then preaching in a hired room in Paris, and to that room my father betook himself on Sundays. There also he himself preached, on June 14th, from Psalm xxxi. 7. On the 21st we heard Dr. Kirk, an American, at the chapel in the Rue Taitbout; and on the 29th, Dr. Leifchild, true to his prevailing purpose, held a kind of Evangelical Alliance Meeting, at which he was requested to take the chair. As he notes, it was "well attended, and very cordial." Dr. Kirk and others effectively addressed the assembly, and it was truly refreshing to hold so hearty a meeting on behalf of religious alliance in the Metropolis of our political allies and our religious opponents.

Dear to Dr. Leifchild's heart was the declaration of evangelical truth in so populous a city, and such a resort of strangers as Paris. Upon his return to London he at once set on foot a collection for the continuance of preaching in that city. A few of his comparatively wealthy friends responded to his appeal, and he had the pleasure of remitting to his friend and former disciple, a contribution amounting to nearly £50. Thus it was to the end. Wherever he went he was a preacher and a helper. Though he journeyed for recreation, he still dropped seeds of truth by the way-side. When he met brethren of other lands, his first purpose was to hold a meeting for prayer and union. When he regained his humble home, his first thought was to succour and sustain those whom he had lately left, and so by all the means at his command, to be a helper of others' joy, and a supporter of others' burdens.

In December, 1857, we enjoyed the privilege of a visit from Dr. Livingstone, the celebrated African explorer, accompanied by his excellent wife. The Doctor had sometimes heard my father preach at Craven Chapel, and had formed a high estimate

of his abilities and character. It was no trifling token of respect which the traveller now paid to the minister, inasmuch as at this time he was beset with invitations from many quarters, and scarcely had an evening he could call his own. But he had resolved to accept my father's invitation to spend a few quiet hours with him, and, as he afterwards admitted, they were some of the pleasantest he passed in London. He was not questioned and cross-questioned, but suffered to talk or listen as he preferred; and he certainly was a listener to his aged friend quite as often as a speaker. At the close he offered a simple and heartfelt supplication at our family altar.

While the Doctor was writing autographs for others, Mrs. Livingstone wrote one for my father in his own pocket-book, which now lies before me. It is the African version of 1 John iv. 17, and is signed in a firm handwriting,—

“MARY LIVINGSTONE,

“4, Fitzroy Terrace, December 7th, 1857.”

Neither the writer nor the receiver of this autograph are living. Their love is, indeed, now made perfect; and of those two departed believers, if of any, it may be justly said that they will “have boldness in the day of judgment.”

Dr. Leifchild took this opportunity of sending an encouraging and affectionate letter to his friend Mr. Moffat, the well-known African missionary.

One strongly distinguishing feature of my father's old age was his incessant mental activity. He had now, indeed, retired from a public pastorate, but very few ministers have lived so active a life while in professed senile retirement. Never was there a more signal illustration of unfailing energy of soul while the outward man was decaying day by day, and yet not decaying so as to unfit him for public duty. The fact that numerous applications for his services were made to him from the principal London ministers and congregations, of itself attested the continuance of

his acceptance, as well as the respect in which he was held. Fortunately he has penned this brief record of one year's public engagements, and let it be remembered that the man who fulfilled them was in his seventy-eighth year.

"*December* 31, 1858. — On reviewing this year, and upon the eve of its departure, I find several causes for thankfulness and hope.

"I began it and closed the preceding one with some disturbance of my bodily health, producing great weakness and incapacity for enjoyment, but by a vigorous course of medicine it passed off. With some returns of bronchitis in the early part of the year, I have passed through it in a healthy, cheerful, and active manner.

"I have preached frequently, and sometimes with great ease and liberty, but always with diligent preparation. I have made four entirely new sermons, and newly moulded five others.

"The following is a list of the places at which I have preached during the year, on the mornings of the Sabbath-day:—

Hare-court New Chapel, Canonbury.

Lewisham Chapel, Lewisham (three times).

Bethnal-green Chapel, lately Mr. Viney's.

Battersea Chapel—Baptist—Mr Soul's.

Mortlake, for Dr. Henderson.

Upper Clapton, for Mr. Gamble (twice).

Craven Chapel (three times).

Bloomsbury Chapel, for Mr. Brock.

Hanover Chapel, Peckham (twice).

Regent's-park Chapel, for Mr. Landels.

Bedford Chapel, Camden-town.

Bangor, North-Wales—the New English Chapel (supplied there for two or three Sabbaths).

Llanberis, North Wales—the Welsh Chapel.

Leicester, Mr. M'All's New Chapel.

Kingstown, Ireland, for Mr. Denham Smith.

The Weigh-house Chapel, for Mr. Binney (two or three morning sermons).

Salter's-hall Chapel, for Mr. Hobson.
 Bristol, Castle-green Chapel (the Missionary Sermon).
 Royston, Cambs., for Mr. Forsaith (twice).
 Hornsey-road New Chapel—Opening Sermon—for the Wesleyans.
 Northampton, for Mr. Prust.
 New College Chapel, St. John's Wood.
 Sydenham Chapel, for Mr. Hine.
 Gravel Pits, Kensington, Old Chapel, for Mr. Williams.
 Barnsbury Chapel, Islington.
 Hoxton—the former Hoxton Academy Chapel.
 Eccleston Chapel, Eccleston-square.

On Week Days.

Fetter-lane Chapel, for Mr. March.
 Chapel in the Borough, for Mr. Littler.

“I have also delivered during the year the following public Addresses :—

Address to the Evangelical Alliance, the meeting on New Year's-day at Freemasons'-hall.
 Address to the Students at New College, St. John's Wood, previous to the Midsummer Vacation.
 Address on laying the foundation-stone of Mr. Hooper's new Chapel at Chelsea.
 Address at the grave at Kensal-green Cemetery, at the funeral of my deacon, George Wilson, Esq.
 Discourse at the funeral of Dr. Bunting, at the City Road Chapel (Wesleyan), June 22d.”

All these addresses were preserved in manuscript.

“I have been obliged to decline requests to preach for the London Missionary Society in May, in London, and also at Argyle Chapel at Bath, as well as the new chapel there. I have further declined to preach at Surrey Chapel; at Trinity Chapel, Poplar; and Union Chapel, Islington.”

It may be doubted if this record of public work by a minister of seventy-eight years of age has ever been surpassed. So varied

in place, and so close in sequence were these engagements—so great also in interest and importance were these addresses—that it is not a little remarkable that Dr. Leifchild performed and delivered them all satisfactorily. It must also be remembered, that in no one instance did he read his sermons, or addresses, and that he in no instance employed a written note during delivery. Each sermon and each oration was carefully prepared beforehand, and delivered in his usual free style. Few speakers preserve their oratorical powers to seventy-eight, fewer still their memory.

Of the sermons so preached, nothing further need be said, but some observations should be added respecting some of the addresses. The first-named was addressed to a full meeting on the New Year's Day morning, and was marked by much feeling on the speaker's part, and by deeply respectful attention on the part of those who listened. The speaker stood up in the midst of the assembly like the father and founder of the Alliance for which he was now evidently making his last public effort. He spoke to many strangers in face, but to none in heart. There were many who had not known his person, but none who did not revere his name. Members of the Established Church, and of other religious communities, crowded the Hall, but one spirit of love and fraternity pervaded them all. A hallowed piety reigned over the entire assembly, and the subsequent speakers, of various sections of the Christian church, alluded in affectionate terms to their father in years and their brother in devotedness to the cause of Christ. The aged orator himself then took leave of them for this life, and touchingly expressed his hope of associating with them in another and higher sphere, where parting and infirmity would no more be known.

Special reference should also be made to the address he delivered at the funeral of his old friend, Dr. Bunting. It was more than fifty years previously that he had heard the sound of the voice, then silenced by death, proclaiming from the very pulpit in which he (Dr. Leifchild) was then standing, the truths of the

everlasting Gospel. The two preachers, who had separated in early life, had respectively risen to the highest position in their respective communities. Both had become extensively known and honoured. Both had laboured in different sections of the Christian church, and both had laboured together in the cause of Christian union. At first they had separated upon points of doctrine, at last they had united on grounds of fraternity. In private life, also, these two eminent ministers, who had long taken different parts, met in the years of their common decline, and then with an affection and heartiness (at least from the more demonstrative of the two) which was refreshing to witness. They communed in free conversation, while each acknowledged that the great Head of the Church had guided them aright, and that if they had laboured long apart, they were now brought together to anticipate the future recompence appearing before them both, day by day, in increasing distinctness.

One must needs enter into his reward first; and when the summons of departure came to Dr. Bunting, it was natural that he who tarried behind yet awhile, should speak at his funeral. Addressing the Wesleyan ministers on that occasion, he said:—

“You, my esteemed brethren in the ministry of this Connexion, have nobly rallied round your departed leader. His memory will live in your hearts, embalmed with a never-dying fragrance. With you I have been privileged to labour occasionally,* and with you to hold a delightful communion. But soon I also must bid you farewell. The last link in the chain of my earliest ministerial connexion is this day broken. And O! the feeling of solitariness produced by a protracted existence! But I shall go to be with our departed friend, and in time with you also, and his honoured family—with those who have gone before, and those

* *Often*, might have been the word; for Dr. Leifchild preached many public sermons for the Wesleyans in London, Manchester, Leeds, and other principal towns. He had opened their chapels, collected funds for them, and now was at the grave of one of their leaders.

who now remain behind. There will we sing, in strains which we cannot now approach, 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us in His own blood, who has made us kings and priests unto God and the Father, to Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.'"

About this period he wrote the subjoined notes on the subject of his past usefulness:—

"I have been pleasingly surprised at the numerous remembrances of me which I have met with in every direction, some of which I never could have anticipated. In omnibuses, in chapels, in vestries, and in the streets, I am accosted with such expressions as these:—'I remember you, dear Sir, thirty years ago, when you preached from such a text at such a place;' or again, 'Do you not recollect me, Sir, to whom you spoke such a word in season fifteen years since?' Some of these instances and places I could not possibly call to mind, others I could remember when they were suggested to me, but I must often have appeared embarrassed, and hardly so gratified as I really was at receiving information of this kind. One day I saw a lady coming towards me as I was proceeding down Tottenham Court Road, whom I recognised as one I had neglected to call upon. I went up to her smiling, and she smiled in return; but I then found that I had mistaken her, and apologised for the mistake. 'But I, Sir,' she said, 'have not mistaken you. I have been one of your hearers occasionally, and though I often wished to speak to you, I never would have ventured to address you, but for this singular meeting. I had a daughter, Sir, who attended your ministry, and as it was blessed to her soul, she often wished me to let you know the fact. She was a pupil in Miss B.'s establishment, and heard you once give an address to the young ladies, which greatly influenced her mind. I should probably never have intruded upon you unless you had first spoken to me. Thus, a mistake in the street gave me cause to lift up my heart to God in gratitude.

“While in search of a house, I repaired by the North Western railway to Welwyn, Herts, through Hatfield. It is a delightful country, and I was desirous of seeing the residence and grounds once belonging to Dr. Young, the poet. This house had been purchased and recently occupied by a merchant of London. To him I had no introduction, but I asked the servant to communicate my wishes respectfully to his master. He came to me and listened with good feeling to my apology for intruding upon him. I added, that I perceived from his purchase of the house that he had a taste and fancy for the locality, and that therefore I hoped he would not be offended if I should cherish a similar taste, and ask the favour of being allowed to see the place. ‘Certainly,’ replied he, ‘you shall, Sir; but I have not the pleasure of knowing your name.’ When I mentioned it he exclaimed, ‘What, are you the preacher at that great chapel, near Golden-square? I know you well, Sir, for I have often heard you preach there, though not with that profit which ought to have followed. Pray, stop and dine with me, Sir, and meet some of my friends; it will give us all great pleasure to receive you!’

“Although I declined his invitation, I said I might accept a similar one at some future time. He replied that, if I forwarded him my address, he would call to claim my company.

“In going round the grounds I pointed out to him several spots which had been hallowed by the poet’s muse and by his allusions to them. I particularly drew attention to a long avenue of beech trees lining an ascent, at the summit of which stood an apparent alcove. On approaching this, it was found to be a mere painting in good perspective, on which were inscribed the following words:—

“The things unseen do not deceive us.”

I informed him also of the very graceful *impromptu* of Dr. Young, while in the company of some ladies who were walking with him in the garden, on an occasion when his servant came

to tell him some visitors had arrived in the house, and desired to speak to him. On his refusing to go to the house on account of his fair companions' presence, they remonstrated, and actually compelled him to depart. On this he turned, bowed, and thus addressed them :—

‘Thus Adam looked when from the garden driven,
And thus disputed orders sent from Heaven ;
Like him I go, for to depart I'm loth,
Like him I go, for angels drove us both ;
His fate was hard, but mine still more unkind,
His Eve went with him, but mine stays behind.”

“ When I went recently to Upper Clapton, to preach at the chapel there, one of the deacons reminded me of a sermon which I had preached several years before at Newport Pagnell from these words :—‘ The children of light shall be joyful in their King.’ It had made a deep impression upon this gentleman’s mind, and, as he informed me, on that of several other hearers.

“ After the service on this occasion, Mrs. J., a lady eighty-three years of age, came feeble and tottering into the vestry. She had been much affected while hearing me, and exclaimed, ‘ Ah, my dear Sir, two girls of mine will greet you in heaven. You were the instrument of their conversion.’ I assured her I did not call the reference to mind. ‘ What,’ added she, ‘ have you forgotten Maria and Fanny J——?’ I then remembered them distinctly as two of my most attached hearers, both of whom had passed from my view into eternity, dying comparatively young.”

One of the ladies here referred to had married, and Dr. Leif-child had baptized her only child, a son, who grew up and emigrated to Australia, bearing with him an affectionate remembrance of his mother’s minister.

The present page is as suitable as any other for the introduction of several notices of his usefulness which my father had

noted at different times in his old age. No attempt is made at chronological order, and the instances are collected out of several records.

“A young minister settled at Reading, named Kilpin, once called upon me, and requested me to preach at the anniversary of the opening of his chapel. I was obliged from stress of work to decline his request. At the same time I reminded him that he had refused to preach for me at Craven Chapel a second time, when after his first sermon there I asked his services. ‘Doctor,’ he rejoined, ‘Doctor, I could not, I really could not preach there.’ On my inquiring the reason, he made this statement:—

“‘Many years ago, when a very young man, I was much distressed in mind, and existence was a burden to me. I was then living at Westminster, and in that state of mind determined one Sunday night to go to Craven Chapel. You preached from this text: “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee.” O, the emotions awakened by that sermon! O, the change certainly wrought in me at that time! When I entered your pulpit some time ago to preach for you, the thought of my previous state, of my sad distress, came upon me, and, believe me, I almost fainted at the recollection. I was enabled to get through the service, but dare not trust myself in your pulpit again.’ This excellent and useful young minister died shortly afterwards.

“*Sunday, Feb. 20th, 1853.*—This evening, after preaching at Barbican Chapel, in the City, an elderly and respectable female came into the vestry with a slip of paper in her hand. ‘I hope, Sir,’ said she, addressing me, ‘I shall not offend you by speaking to you, but I long to tell you that *forty-five years ago* I heard you preach from this text (holding out the slip of paper, on which was written in a neat handwriting), “Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope.”—Zech. ix. 12. It was at Orange-street Chapel, Sir, and by your sermon I was brought to God.’

“‘And have you walked with God for all the years afterwards?’ I asked.

“‘She has, Sir,’ added one of the deacons of the chapel, who was present, ‘as we can testify, for she has been a consistent member with us for many years, though she has lately removed to the new chapel in the City-road, where Mr. Edwards is the minister.’

“On afterwards mentioning this female’s name (Mrs. Shepperd) to him, Mr. Edwards offered his testimony with that of his deacons to the excellence of Mrs. Shepperd’s character and life. I was much gratified with this instance of usefulness, and the test of time which it had so successfully borne.” (I may add, that on subsequently visiting the deacon above referred to, he narrated again and confirmed the above anecdote, adding some pleasing recollections of his own respecting my father’s early ministry, which he had occasionally attended.)

“When I went to see Mr. Bagster (the publisher of the well-known Bagster’s Bibles) at old Windsor, I was informed of the somewhat singular fate of a sermon which I had once preached at Castle-street Chapel, Reading, many years previously. The subject was the New Birth, and a young man was converted by hearing it. He became a preacher at Mr. Bagster’s little chapel at Old Windsor. The same person, upon hearing that I was supplying the pulpit of Mr. Stoughton at Windsor, was reminded of my old sermon which had been made so useful to himself. He therefore preached it again from recollection that same Sunday evening at Mr. Bagster’s chapel at Old Windsor, when it was again blessed to the conversion of one of Mr. Bagster’s servants.

“I afterwards mentioned these pleasing facts to Mr. Lewis, who was in connexion with the Baptist Chapel at Margate, Kent, and added some particulars of the sermon, including its divisions. These he communicated to his brother, a minister in some part of the country, who then preached a sermon from the same

text, which was made the means of the conversion of another young person. How fortunate the fate of this one sermon!"

On December 31, 1858, he wrote:—"I have heard incidentally this year of more instances of my usefulness while at Craven Chapel than in any former years since my retirement. At Lewisham, Mr. P. and his wife from India referred to me in this way. A good woman also came and told me that I had 'frightened her into religion thirty years ago.' The editor of a newspaper referred to my sermon from the text, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?' and said it had greatly influenced him. Several other cases also were, as we should say, accidentally brought before me. I was grateful to find that all these persons were walking in the truth."

Under the same date he has noted the following:—

"I met several ministers at Mr. Mudie's house in Russell-square on the subject of revivals in religion. Mr. Hiron, a Baptist minister, called upon me to narrate instances of my usefulness by means of private conversation, in which, he said, he knew I had been very successful. I remembered and mentioned several for the encouragement of the company present, and I exhorted them to adopt that course which had *long become my habit*. It has been so much of a habit with me to inculcate the truths of the Gospel in ordinary discourse that I was hardly aware of having done so until often reminded of it by some unsuspected hint or allusion. I, however, moderated the statement of the number to whom I had been made useful in this way, thinking it might be exaggerated.

"From the period of entrance upon my ministry, I have always been intent upon insinuating religious sentiments in the course of conversation with all persons, and especially the young. And now, towards the close of my life, the numerous proofs afforded to me of the good results of these passing remarks have astonished and delighted me.

"It became, at length, so much of a habit with me to interweave the truths of the Gospel with ordinary discourse, that I was

hardly aware of having done so until reminded of it by some unexpected hint or allusion. Once, while walking with an alderman of London in his grounds, in a village adjacent to the Metropolis, I fell into discourse about the numerous images in nature by which, through the consecration of our thoughts to religion and Holy Writ, the idea of Jesus Christ was brought to our notice. These occurred to me in great variety as I went on. 'There is a plant, Sir,' said I, 'and Christ is said to be "a plant of renown." Here is a rose, and there a lily; and Christ is said to be the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valley. There is a fountain; and His blood is a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. This path, Sir, reminds me that He is the way, the truth, and the life; yonder sun, that He is the Sun of righteousness, and the light of the world. We are now going into the house, to partake of some refreshment; and shall we not think of Him as the bread of life, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed? Often you meet with a friend; and He is a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother. To-morrow in court you may listen to an advocate; and He is an Advocate with the Father. You will, Sir, and soon, I believe, be the presiding magistrate; and we believe that He will come to be our Judge.' These and some other resemblances I suggested to my host, at which he expressed his pleasure and surprise, exclaiming, 'Dr. Leifchild, you have made my garden a Bible, and I shall never walk in it without reading there the lessons which you have suggested.'"

This worthy alderman the next year became Lord Mayor of London, and in that office showed marked attention and hospitality to my father. He had through this minister come to understand that Dissent was not, as often alleged, connected with vulgarity or ignorance, and that religion might be combined with social enjoyment, ease, and gaiety of manner, and high cultivation of the heart and intellect.

Another example of my father's success in preaching has come

to my knowledge after his decease, and is thus communicated to me by Mr. Large:—

“When visiting, about three summers since, at the house of a friend in a retired part of Suffolk, I was introduced to an agricultural gentleman, one incident of whose history will, I know, greatly interest you. He is the father of a large and promising family, and has been for many years the principal deacon of a thriving Congregational church, and the superintendent of the Sabbath school in connexion with it. Talking with him one evening at the house of our mutual friend, I said, ‘Do you know — Chapel, at —?’ ‘Oh, yes,’ said he, ‘I know the place well, and I have the best reasons in the world for remembering it.’ ‘Indeed! Pray, may I ask what renders it so remarkable?’ ‘You shall hear. I was induced by our kind host to attend the opening services. You know it is now more than twenty years since the chapel was built. On that occasion Dr. Leifchild preached the morning sermon. Were you there?’ ‘I was,’ said I, ‘and I can tell you the subject of the discourse. It was on the New Birth.’ ‘Yes, that was it,’ said he; ‘and do you remember the preacher introduced, towards the close of the sermon, a solemn address or apostrophe to the Holy Spirit?’ ‘I recollect it perfectly.’ ‘Well, when I entered the chapel, I was a thoughtless, worldly young man; but the Doctor’s sermon—*that part of it, particularly*—arrested my attention. Every word seemed to thrill through me. It rung in my ears and filled my thoughts to such an extent all the day, that I could hear nothing else and think of nothing else. I was present in the evening, when Mr. M. preached. I dare say it was a very good sermon; but what I had heard in the morning so absorbed me, that I was not able to listen, and when I came away, scarcely knew what it had been about. The powerful impression then made continued a long while afterwards. Indeed, it never wore away, for that sermon was the turning-point in my religious life.’

“I made a memorandum of this conversation at the time it occurred, intending to send it to your revered father, whose words were thus ‘as nails fastened in a sure place.’ As my purpose was not carried into effect, I send the recital to you, as one of a multitude of instances which have come to light after many years, in which he was the unconscious instrument of ‘converting a sinner from the error of his ways, and saving a soul from death.’

“I may add, too, that Mrs. L. and myself, having been engaged

with others in founding that place of worship, we received no small reward in thus unexpectedly hearing, after twenty years, of the conversion of an immortal soul at the very first service held within its walls."

It was during the year 1858 that, while at Leicester, Dr. Leif-child made an excursion with some local friends to Bradgate Hall, once inhabited by Lady Jane Grey. There he delighted himself with the interesting historical associations, and was told that "all the trees were headless on the day that Lady Jane was beheaded." That he should prompt the party to sing a hymn, which "sounded delightfully," might be expected; but not that he should meet with a man aged ninety-two years, whose name was John Wesley, and who could give an interesting account of his religious life, as my father thus narrates:—

"All his family had been of the same name—his father, grandfather, &c. I judge that they had been Methodists. I asked him, 'Are you in Christ?' He answered, 'Yes, I hope so. I know I have the sweetest communion with God upon my bed; it is like meat to my corporeal frame. I cannot read or hear, but I think the Spirit of God has taught me. I know whom I have believed.' After some further conversation he inquired, 'May I ask who I am talking to?' He was told I was a minister of the Gospel. He immediately took my hand, and with a glistening eye said, 'I am so thankful that a good man should come to talk to me! I could go down upon my old knees to thank you.'"

Still more gratifying was the succeeding event:—"One morning we called at Latimer's birth-place, where Mrs. Lydall, the matron who resided in the house, upon hearing my name, showed me a letter from her son, written many years ago, and giving an account of the benefit which he had derived from a sermon I had preached at Worthing, Sussex. When, with some difficulty, the subject and occasion were brought to my remembrance, I recalled the impression made upon my own mind at the time, namely, that I had then preached to one of the most listless and lifeless

audiences I ever addressed. Yet it appeared that this very occasion was greatly blessed to the young man now deceased ; for the letter I now looked at stated the fact.

“Several years ago Mr. Williams, a member of the church, sat near to me at a social meeting at Barnsbury Chapel, over which I was called to preside. He was induced in the course of the evening to inform me that fourteen years before that time he had heard a sermon by me at Craven Chapel, which was blessed to his conversion. He had soon after repaired to my dwelling-house, in order to make known this fact to me ; but when he stood before the door, he had not sufficient courage to knock. With the same object in view, he had even followed me from my house to Craven Chapel, but in vain. In time his Christian character had been matured, and he had become a deacon at Claremont Chapel, at Pentonville, from which he removed to Barnsbury Chapel, the minister of which testified that he was a highly estimable man, and a useful co-operator with himself.

“The wife of the Rev. Mr. Cresswell of Canterbury, who had been brought to God in her early life by my ministry at Kensington, was anxious that a son of Mr. Cresswell's (by a former wife), who had come to reside in London, should attend at my chapel. This he did, and happily was led to devote himself to God, and to join my church. When visiting Canterbury, I found him at the point of death ; and oh ! what was his joy at seeing me. So rejoiced was he, that he wanted to kiss my hand. He was most communicative respecting the instruction and benefit which he had derived from my preaching ; and finally he departed this life in the full assurance of faith. How gratifying to me was his death-bed testimony !

“A son-in-law of the Rev. Mr. Lewis of Islington informed me that he had seen the diary of a young Christian, then deceased, in which she ascribed her conversion to a sermon which I had preached in Islington thirty-six years before.

“When at Dudley, I met a Baptist minister, who stopped me

in the street, and with tears in his eyes informed me that his own son had died in the faith, having been converted under my ministry in London.

“About the year 1845 or 1846, being in the neighbourhood of Chatsworth, the splendid seat of the Duke of Devonshire, I paid a visit to the grounds and the famous conservatory. As well as I could, I got into conversation with the young man, one of the under-gardeners, who showed us the grounds. On ascertaining that he neglected public worship on the Sabbath to study books on botany, I inquired where he had been brought up. ‘In London,’ said he; ‘and there I used to go to meeting with my mother.’ ‘To what chapel?’ I asked. ‘One in Wells Street in the mornings, and to another in the evenings called Craven Chapel.’ ‘Who preached there?’ I inquired. ‘An old gentleman,’ said he, ‘and it was a large congregation.’ ‘Did his ministry make no impression on you?’ continued I. ‘Yes it did, and often frightened me all the Sunday nights; but it went away again on the Monday mornings.’ ‘Young man,’ said I, looking him solemnly in the face, ‘I shall be a witness against you at the Judgment Day.’ ‘Against me, Sir!’ rejoined he, starting back; ‘against me, Sir! for what?’ ‘Because,’ I continued, ‘I have called upon you to embrace the Gospel, and you have rejected it. I am the minister you heard at Craven Chapel. I must witness against you at last, as I witness against you now.’ ‘Good God!’ he exclaimed, ‘who would have thought it?’ and he walked about sighing, so that I could get no further information from him.”

I, also, on my part, frequently became acquainted with previously unknown instances of my father's usefulness. Having, for instance, occasion to correspond with Mr. Robert Damon of Weymouth, he informed me that he had been at one time a hearer in Craven Chapel. Upon further inquiry, I found that his case was another interesting proof of the preacher's success, as is apparent in an extract from one of Mr. Damon's letters to

me, in which he observes,—“I was attracted to Craven by your father’s preaching, and I became at length a constant hearer and afterwards a member of the church, though until then I had never attended a Dissenting chapel or an evangelical ministry. It was, therefore, under your revered father that I received my first serious impressions. From his pulpit ministrations, and from the young men’s class which he conducted, my religious principles were formed and established.

“The happiest associations of my life are with Craven Chapel. To my being led there, in the good providence of God, I owe my religious enjoyments, my present position, and whatever influence I may have in the cause of Christ.”

Mr. Damon is now a deacon of an Independent chapel at Weymouth, and very useful in that connexion.

Some instances of Dr. Leifchild’s usefulness have come to light after his death, and in connexion with its announcement. The Rev. John Graham of Craven Chapel, his successor, mentions that when a lady at Dorchester heard that he occupied what was formerly Dr. Leifchild’s pulpit, she sent for him, and received him cordially, at the same time informing him with much emotion that two of her daughters were now, as she fully believed, in heaven, and that they attributed their conversion to conversations which Dr. Leifchild had held with them when in Dorchester. He had spoken to them so urgently and yet so affectionately on the most solemn subjects, that they were led to reflect, to pray, and to dedicate themselves to God.

The annexed reflections, dated February 15th, 1860, Dr. Leifchild’s *eightieth* birthday, possess a particular interest:—

“The review has supplied me with many reflections of a mixed character—some pleasing, some humbling, and some profitable. I have gathered in my memory the review of former years which I have already penned as they closed, up to the first forty or fifty years of my life. This last year would make but some few additions and alterations to them.

“One lesson which I have learnt from a part of my experience in this year is, not to lay too much stress upon an unpleasant impression produced by an unfortunate state of things at the time, so as to take some hasty step in consequence, but leisurely to await the rectification of the present state of things by unexpected or by ordinary movements of Providence. A more healthful state of the nervous system will affect our view of things, although they really remain the same; I find that things adjust themselves better than we could adjust them by unnecessary interference. ‘In your patience possess ye your souls.’

“I have also learnt how much weight may be attached to a warm and inconsiderate expression or a momentary action. This occurs to the recollection when least expected, and produces a feeling of remorse, which is increased by the consideration of the impossibility of its being recalled or obliterated. Life appears to me now to have so much sameness, and to afford so little prospect of obtaining more than has been already gained, that the spur to activity is gone, and all zest is removed from the things which remain. Hence the future does not now much invite me, and its probable curtailment does not greatly distress me.

“I am quite uncertain of the effect which the book I have just finished* may have on the minds of others; but I know that my main object was kept prominently in view through the whole of its preparation, that of testifying to the explanation and confirmation of portions of revealed truth, in the hope that I might lead others to similar thoughts and to religious practice.

“The chief regret I feel is, the loss of some recent opportunities of doing or of getting good, except as it may be by snatches; and the necessity, therefore, of living upon the past,

* A Selection of Remarkable Facts of a Providential and Religious Character, illustrative and confirmatory of different portions of Scripture. London. 1860.

whereby I want excitement. Yet I may still be able to write and speak a little in my former manner for the benefit of those with whom I come into contact. What a blessing it is that I do not want anything necessary for me, although I have no superfluities; and that, I have no fear of any man!" (A passage is here omitted in which he refers in terms of satisfaction to his son and his writings in the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh Reviews*, &c., &c.)

"One thought recently occurred to me, which I write down as a corrective for the future, and as an incentive to what is good—namely, ‘*When I am in Paradise, what shall I wish I had done while I remained in the flesh?*’ Anticipating generally what that would be, I often think of it when I am about to propose anything to myself.

"What a new world of wonders have I seen in the Scriptures, especially in the references to the works of the Creator, and His wonders in the creation; which I had taken too little account of in my early studies, and am only now but partially becoming acquainted with. I delight in illustrations of natural scenery; these gratify me much, keeping my intellect active and warming my heart.

"J. LEIFCHILD,

"February 15th, 1860."

"Aged 80 years."

He was still able to enjoy life and to delight in conversation. On March 3rd, he met John Bright, Esq., M.P., at the house of a mutual friend, and spent the evening in energetic conversation with that active politician. The next day, which was Sunday, he repaired to Craven Chapel, and there joined in the sacramental service. On the 6th of May he was again at the same chapel, and on the 11th of that month he presided there at the Missionary Communion. On the 3rd of June he was at Albany Chapel, and there also gave an address at the conclusion of the sacramental service. Some infants were baptized by him at Albany Chapel on the 17th of June; one of which was a child

of the minister of that sanctuary, and named, I believe, after the baptizer. On nearly every Sabbath of the year up to this date he was at worship, and he sang, prayed, and listened when he did not preach.

In July of this year he visited Guernsey. It was difficult indeed to get him there, but easy enough to promote his enjoyment of the scenery of that beautiful island. He made daily excursions and some new friends—to whom only his person, but not his name, was new.

A slight sketch may here be introduced of my father as he taught a small and accidental audience in that beautiful rock-defended little bay, Moulin Huet. Let him now be depicted as he was then and there.

He has descended from the high level of a retired and unfrequented road, and has with some difficulty been conveyed down a rough and stony pathway to the quietest corner of the rarely-invaded bay. He is tenderly helped towards a little cottage, from which an old arm-chair is borrowed, and placed within view of the rippling sea. There sits the aged minister, now in his eighty-first year, and therefrom he gazes with calm satisfaction beyond the near and narrow strip of blue ocean, onward to that shoreless expanse which resembles the great and unknown deep on which his spirit must soon venture. Old as he is, he delights in the scenery, upon which I had reported to him a few days before, and to which I had resolved to accompany him.

Well may he delight in this exquisitely beautiful bay, for it is enclosed by lofty and precipitous rock-walls, and when resting in it you seem to be shut out from the whole busy world of humanity. On the one hand, and full in our view, four scarcely detached masses of rock grandly rise sheer out of the sea, like so many massive battlements, inaccessible and unchangeable. Sportive sunbeams are playing upon their scarred surfaces, and bringing out from them the varied tints which innumerable lichens can impart even to bare and colourless granite. On the

other hand, jagged but minor masses of granite run far out to sea. In between its huge and towering frame-work, the sea itself is brightly blue, almost as brightly blue as if the locality were Neapolitan. Indeed, as you look upon the little turquoise-like waves rippling clearly and shiningly on the white sands, you can scarcely believe yourself far away from an Italian coast.

There are but two or three dwellings in sight, and the nearest one is the little cottage just alluded to. Even in that small tenement there are "Apartments to Let." When inspected they appear Lilliputian, but so secluded is the spot, so romantic the scenery and so healthful the air, that they are rarely untenanted during summer. The present lodgers are, a young gentleman (now away for a ramble), his wife, not long married to him, and their first child, an infant in arms. The lady contrives to get a look at the old gentleman in the arm-chair; soon she approaches him, and as he seems accessible and disposed to conversation, the servant is allowed to accompany her with her babe. Finally that little treasure is entrusted for a minute or two to the old man's arms.

This is a scene worth dwelling upon for a moment, though merely another passage in the old story of the succession of human generations. Now, age and infancy are for a moment one. Enfeebled arms encircle a feeble infant. Strength has departed from the one, nor yet been imparted to the other. The confiding babe smiles in answer to the old man's smile, just as yonder clear sea returns the image of an over-bending promontory. It is indeed a scene of smiles, for the glad and graceful mother smiles to see her infant smile. The old man from the cottage smiles, his little granddaughter smiles—we all smile; and why should we not all smile at this touching sight? The extremes of age are here united. The youngest life is linked on to the oldest. Experience looks backward, expectation looks forward. The aged saint has nearly passed his pilgrimage, and now enfolds one who has yet to take its first steps. He

looks to heaven and invokes a blessing on the babe—the mother looks at him, and then at the little unconscious subject of benediction. His scanty snow-white hairs are stirred by the light sea-breeze, while her dishevelled tresses (for she has been bathing) wave fully, freely, and playfully. Soon the benediction of the infant is succeeded by congratulations to the mother—a lady alike in mien and manner. Delightedly she receives again her infant as if from apostolic arms. Why should not delight pervade us all? Here nature and humanity meet in holy harmony. One might wander far and not find a more romantic bay—far and not behold a more touching contrast.

The young gentleman now finds his way from a remote part of the bay to the spot where his wife and child are standing near the old arm-chair. He, too, is gratified with the group, and contributes his smile to the general gladness. Pleased to find a patient auditor, though he be only an old man, the young one at once dashes into conversation with his senior. Having recently returned from India, he is full of the fearful mutiny, and is allowed to run on and to give vent to his opinions, political and personal, but he is not allowed to run off at the conclusion. The aged stranger, according to his wont, soon introduces the subject of religion. The Indian mutiny, the scenery at present around them, the babe, the mother,—all supply topics from which to start off religiously. The young gentleman is mute and attempts to sidle away, but finds he cannot decently elude his monitor; so he patiently seats himself upon the grass and looks up, resigned at first, interested afterwards. The venerable teacher elicits from him that his conscience is not at ease, that his life has been unsatisfactory, and that he has never known true peace of mind. Enough has been confessed, the old preacher is off upon a high homily, his young auditor cannot get off upon anything, and therefore continues upon the scanty turf.

It is very clear, after awhile, that his feelings are touched, and

it becomes deeply interesting to watch those two men. The aged prophet in the arm-chair becomes solemn, and yet kind and fatherly; the young man sits at his feet and is no longer impatient. The tide of emotion flows into his soul, as the tide of waters is flowing into the bay beneath. He feels, but is rather perplexed, and at length attempts a sharp turn back towards the Indian mutiny. But he is soon reined in by the practised hand of the experienced guide, and is compelled to hear the homily out.

Up the fern-clothed ravine we now all proceed. The aged prophet's limbs scarcely sustain him, but the younger folks lend their support. The vehicle approaches as near as possible, but the prophet espying a cottage at the top, resolves to make for it and rest there. While so engaged the young couple return home and send him an invitation to refreshment; he declines, but sends his card and address. The exhorted young gentleman, his fair bride, and his beautiful babe never more beheld the venerable teacher, but probably they still remember him. He now bestows another blessing on babes, twins, a week old, who are placed in his arms by the cottagers, and after nominating them Peter and John, he drives away, having given instruction to parents, benediction to infants, and pleasure to all.

Additional sketches of interest might be drawn from this month at Guernsey, where he offered an ordination prayer, and found it not easy to avoid preaching. One circumstance may be added of an unusual nature. True to his old affection he one day attended an Evangelical Alliance or Union meeting in a large room. While he himself was taking part in the service a policeman entered the room and remained. On leaving, the policeman looked earnestly at my father and exclaimed, "I am sure, Sir, your name is Leifchild. It is now as long as *forty years ago* that I heard you preach at Mr. Boddington's Meeting at Horselydown; and though I never saw or heard you afterwards till this morning, and never spoke to you before, I

recognized you by *your voice*. I knew it as soon as you began to speak. I was sure I could not be mistaken." So strange a recognition much interested the veteran preacher, and, incredible as it seemed, there was no reason to doubt its truth. The policeman, Jessop by name, was known to and respected by many of the religious people, and he could have no motive to deceive.

In September, 1860, Dr. Leifchild paid a visit to Hastings. As was now invariably the case, wherever he journeyed, he met with several persons who gratefully remembered his ministrations. Admiring a prettily-situated cottage, he entered it to inquire if it were to let. One of the occupants, a lady, came to inform him that she and her husband rented it. No sooner had he addressed her than she exclaimed, "It is Dr. Leifchild! Oh, Sir, how well I remember your preaching at ——!"

Another, and a remarkable reminiscence of himself at this time he has thus described:—

"I went to Fairlight Mill. Conversing with a poor woman, and finding her pious, I was interrupted by a spectator whom I had not till then observed. Speaking loudly, he said, 'Why, that is Dr. Leifchild. I recollected you, Sir, not by your appearance, but by *your voice*, which I heard at Bedford now *twenty years ago*, when you preached the funeral sermon of young Mr. Francis. I was introduced to you by Mr. Brown, the bookseller.'" It may be said in this instance:—

The voice that dwelt in Memory's cell,
And slept as though forgotten there,
Came back like some remembered bell,
Whose music haunts the evening air.

In the memoranda of this year Dr. Leifchild has entered some brief notes of his state of body and mind, which will show what he endured in the one and enjoyed in the other:—

"*Nov. 11th*—Bronchitis. *18th*—Bronchitis with threatenings of pneumonia. *19th*—Alarming palpitations. *21st*—The weather and the state of my lungs have confined me to the house, and

induced great debility. 25th—Sleepless nights, with much palpitation. 27th—Mr. Adams (the medical man) every other day. 28th—Restless nights, but generally pleasant thoughts and holy meditations.”

These extracts may serve for one month’s experience. At the close of the year he wrote, with a feeble hand:—

“God be praised for His mercies this past year, the last two months of which have been wearisome through confinement at home and coughing at night, with little ability to read or write. Yet, however low, not fearing, not doubting for the future. Shortness of breath, a few nights since, made me dread incipient asthma; but a change in the weather dispelled the fear and its cause. I regret my uselessness; yet I have many comforting tokens of former usefulness, and often have blessed meditations in my own chamber.”

We now arrive at Dr. Leifchild’s inactive, long resisted, but at length resistless and extreme old age. There is no longer work or recreation for the enfeebled veteran.

His gaze is now fixed on the heavenly horizon. He is at this time like a traveller walking slowly down an avenue of over-arching trees, the leaves of which are deeply tinged with autumnal colours, and with every breeze are showered down beneath his feet; while his eye rests delightedly upon a clump of evergreens beheld through the long vista, and bearing the bright glancings of the sun upon their gleaming foliage. Looking only and intently upon these, the way-worn pilgrim forgets the falling leaves upon his right hand and upon his left. He views objects unfading and unfalling, and unobstructed sunlight plays upon them. To these every step now brings him nearer, while the last drooping attractions of time are already strewing that path which he is leaving behind him. A few more steps, and he will for ever quit the withering avenue, and reach yonder unchanging foliage and unobscured sunbeams!

At the close of March, 1861, his bodily weakness was pain-

fully apparent, and there were many indications of his approaching end. He himself fully anticipated it, prepared for it, and spoke calmly of it. The dawn of the eternal morning seemed to be slowly breaking upon his spirit, even while the confusion of haunting shadows hung round the faint and distant light. In these chill shadows the mortal part trembled and shivered, even while the spirit looked confidently towards the ever-brightening bars of sunlight, and longed for the still brighter morning, and the following fulness of unending day.

During a severe illness of three weeks, he occasioned me much anxiety. On April 12th, addressing himself to me, he said:—"We have now been together many years, and I have always reposed entire confidence in you. I have felt no doubt about you, when placed in any circumstances, or when associated with any persons. I always comforted your dear mother by exclaiming to her when you were away, 'Wherever he is, his right principles and his personal honour will keep him safe. I may now tell you, what I did not intend to tell you ever—namely, that for twenty years your mother and I set apart one hour on every Monday for special supplication on your behalf.

"Keep up your literary habits, and go on with your writing and reviewing. What a blessing has that turn of mind been to you, in occupying you and saving you from idle habits! And what a world of knowledge has been opened to you! Ah! I had none of these advantages. Do go on with your books. Some day or other all your knowledge will turn to good account. It must tell.

"Find me that old quarto, with the odd poetry (referring to a volume of miscellaneous early pieces, including 'Urchard's Epigrams'); you know I have always had a fancy for that class of books.

"I have never been upon a false basis in life. I have never done things for show. I have always striven to appear what I really was. Your real friends may be few, but they will be

worth having. Others you can afford to do without. What is all the glitter, style, and talk of showy life? Does it gain a man one real friend? O, all these things pass away, and shall pass away. How few will really care for me in a little time! Yet there will be some. What is true will remain. Be sure that the solid and true will be valued at length, and I believe in a few years. As to present tastes and opinions, in reference to (certain persons and things named), they are nothing.

"As a minister, I feel deeply concerned about the state of religion and the condition of the churches. I have always, as you know, been deeply interested in these things. I cannot think that the present state of affairs in some churches and congregations is permanent. I believe that the solid and the true will again be appreciated. I think the *shams* (emphasizing the word) will not last. I am sure they are now passing away. I have looked round the various churches at present but you will see that only true and real things will *remain*. Look at Arthur Hallam's 'Remains'—Tennyson's friend—why they are genuine—no sham there!" (He had lately been listening to "The Literary Remains of Arthur Hallam," son of the well-known "Middle-age Hallam," and the subject of Tennyson's "In Memoriam.")

"The desire of posthumous fame is natural. Perhaps I have had my share of this, but I have little of it now. When I was influenced by this desire, I made notes of my life. These I leave to your care. Do the best you can with them; but why should I care about such matters *now*? A good conscience towards God and man I have always had. Nothing can deprive me of that.

'Without conserve of virtue nothing lasts.'

"I might, perhaps, have put myself more forward in public life. I saw other men making themselves prominent, and I felt that I had some good grounds for doing likewise. But *now* the

whole is gone, and I am thankful that I did not put myself forward.

"How many, many solitary hours you have spent with your books and papers! Well, it was better for you—better for you. A public position might have been a burden to you.

"I am going to your mother, your dear mother! I am going to her!

"Worldly things are gone. My memoir, my reputation—I once had some concern about them. Ah! you will one day come to feel how these cares go from you when life is going.

"It is a great thing to be able to go out of this world into the other, fearless of meeting *any* spirit there. I can say that there is *no* spirit I should blush to meet." Then, referring by name to one old friend, previously described as having deceased under circumstances very painful to him and all who knew her, he added:—"I can say that I shall meet her spirit without a blush, so often and so faithfully did I warn her of her sin. I knew little, indeed, of her dying moments, except by report; but I feel that I did all I could do in warning her of her besetting sin. I shall not be ashamed to meet her; but how will *she* meet me?"

"*April 18th.*—I have scarcely ever heard of so peaceful a passage as mine. I am quite happy. Nature fails, but I am happy. I make no pretences, either in religion or art. I am not like ——." (Here, to his own great relief and entertainment, he made some satirical remarks on pretended connoisseurs.)

"I have had a pleasant morning; but what have I to make it unpleasant? I am in perfect peace, with not a trouble in my heart."

During this day, at various hours, he became rather light, and in characteristic modes and terms expressed his abhorrence of all shams. "O," exclaimed he, "O, the shams of the day!" Later in the day, he said, with solemnity, "The house is unroofing. I did not quite expect it would be just now; but certainly the

roof is being taken off, and the inhabitant is going out of the house into a far country."

To the Rev. Thomas Jones (then of Albany Chapel), who called to see him this day, he spoke a few words. "I can truly say that I have enjoyed your ministry. I have had as much pleasure in it as any one in the chapel. I have been truly happy there. I have always loved to *hear* the Gospel, as well as to preach it. My dear brother, I am going to leave the church in a storm, as Dr. Owen said" (quoting his well-known words); "but all will be calm and prosperous in time—no shams then!"

A somewhat satirical humour seemed occasionally to possess him for a few minutes at a time during this three weeks' illness, and might be attributable to disease; yet it was suggestive of his days of health and hilarity, and seemed to be the last flickering of an almost extinguished fire. He was in one of these moods when a friend and former hearer came to see him, and rather injudiciously began to ply my father with several familiar passages of Scripture, as though he needed instruction. "Yes," exclaimed the sick man, "I have taught you for twenty years, and now you shall teach me! Go on."

April 15th (evening).—"I am in the valley of shadow, yet I have no fears. I have, indeed, the fear of caution, but no alarm. I know the tremendous dangers, but I shall not fail. I shall not live many more days. Ask me anything you wish now. I have done with the world. Take away your balloon-world! what is it to me?" (with a toss of disdain.) "O, these are precious hours!"

8 o'clock, p.m.—He requested that Milton's "Lycidas" might be read to him. About half of it was read, and his pertinent though brief remarks evinced his continued pleasure in a poem which had always been a favourite with him.

April 16th.—"O the blessed, blessed Scriptures! how applicable are they to every minute circumstance of life! Once I received a letter with a black seal, and being in terror lest it

should contain news of my mother's death, I paused, and felt unable to open it. But soon these words occurred to me, 'He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. I felt much encouraged by them, opened the letter, and found it to be on indifferent matters.

"I suffered persecution for the truth's sake in my youth, and also later in life. A man may endure this if he is conscious that the truth is with him; but unless he is sure he has the truth, he soon droops and fails, and the very men who may have buoyed up his spirits soon begin to sidle off from him. How often have I seen this! I have elung to what I believed to be the truth of Scripture with the greatest tenacity, and I have always been inwardly supported."

I placed my hand in his, when he feebly grasped it, and said, "May that hand ever receive the same divine help that this one has received!"

April 24th.—After a day of sickness, but no pain, on my bidding him good night, he added, "Good night, my son. A father's blessing, a mother's blessing, and a grandfather's blessing rest upon you!"

Although all the above sentences were uttered under the persuasion that they would be his last in this world, yet strangely, and contrary to all expectation, he gradually revived. Humanly speaking, devoted attention and unwearied patience, in connexion with medical skill, rescued him from the very verge of the tomb. He had stood for a while in the shallows of the dread, dark river of death; he had bathed his feet in those chill waters; but divine mercy had heard the supplications of affection, and permitted him to withdraw his feet from the cold stream, and to remain a little longer as a spectator on the bank while others passed over the flood.

On Sunday, December 1st, 1861, he spoke for about a quarter of an hour at the sacramental table at Craven Chapel. As on former occasions of the same kind, after the service, crowds

pressed up to the chair on which he sat, and affectionately greeted him. Some brought to him the children whom he had baptized in that chapel, but whom he had now some difficulty in recognising even by name. They who had lain as weak infants in his arms had nearly become young men and maidens, and stood before him like a growth of saplings round an aged tree.

On the evening of this day he held a private household service, and referred to his state of mind during the illness above mentioned. He affirmed that he had then experienced the most vivid impressions of God's greatness and omnipotence, and that it was impossible to express what he then felt. With much feeling he repeated Charles Wesley's fine hymn, commencing—

"With glorious clouds encompassed round,
Whom angels dimly see."

A peculiar emphasis seemed to accompany this recitation.

December 9th.—At the tea-table he spoke of his afternoon's meditation, to the effect that God delighted in His own perfections, and in seeing them in a measure reflected in a thousand angels and spirits as mirrors around him. Still more did He delight in the redemption of any one human being who hung upon Him for life, pardon, security, and hope. In this strain my father proceeded, with exalted feeling which cannot be represented in words. The thoughts were great, but derived their chief interest from their evident realization in his own view. He had been reading a sermon by Saurin.

The preceding notes were written at the moment; but the inadequacy of mere notes struck me so forcibly, that I discontinued them. I might, indeed, have recorded numerous observations by my father to a like effect, and in like hours of exalted emotion; but the emotion could not be transferred to paper. It is not merely the thoughts, nor their investiture in appropriate language, that imparts interest to them, but particularly the solemnity which attends the sayings of the departing—the manifest sincerity which the near presence of death insures—

the partial translation of the language of this world into that of another—and all those purely personal interests which gather around a dying man; these are the accompaniments which no transcription can convey to others. What was uttered by lips soon to be sealed in silence came with an effect, and sometimes with a gesture, upon which it would be in vain to dilate. The calm reader does not breathe the same atmosphere, does not entertain the same reverence for “the old man eloquent,” is not touched so deeply with a sense of his worth and a sense of his weakness, and does not so tremblingly dread his loss. Therefore utterances affecting to me, to him might appear but as the common phrases of piety.

How could I represent to others the deep impression made upon me when my father, on more than one occasion at this period, and also in his last days, made use of this expression—“O the great God! O the blessed Saviour! how have I loved Him! How I shall spring to meet Him!” The rapt and upward glance, the clasped hands, the weak and yet significant action which accompanied these last words, who can hope to render appreciable? “How I shall spring to meet Him!” again issued from his quivering lips on his last bed, and nearly on his last day. To me it was inexpressibly moving to stand near and to look upon that pallid and sunken countenance; to gaze upon that lustreless eye, and to lift, with a strain upon all my strength, that almost powerless body; to arrange pillows, and to minister to the enfeebled man as though he were a child. Yet, in the midst of all these sad tokens of feebleness and failure, it was more affecting than any words can describe to hear the aged saint, who could now scarcely lift his lowly head, distinctly and repeatedly exclaim, “O, how I shall spring to meet Him!”

He frequently referred to the state of departed spirits, intermediate between death and the resurrection. This was a subject which had occupied much of his attention in previous years, and one upon which he had preached and read all that he could find

in books. From some unnamed source he extracted the following sentiment:—"What in this world are the deepest, purest, and most captivating enjoyments of the soul? Are they not found in itself, and in communion with spirits similarly constituted—in memory, in hope, and returned affection? Action alone is denied in the other world; but possessed of such sweet solaces in the intermediate state, the soul may well await eternity for that." To this he added, "Such may be the happiness of Paradise, or the state of separate spirits; and a drop of this happiness is sometimes afforded to mortals here."

While speaking of the dissolution of soul and body, he would sometimes repeat the annexed verses, from a hymn in his "Original Hymns:"—

"Then will the quivering spirit stand
In wonder at that unknown land,
And look, and long, and wait to see
The pathway of eternity.

"Yet, Lord of life, if thou art near,
This boding heart shall feel no fear;
Thy hand will bear thy child above,
Thine own right hand of power and love.

"Nor long the intervening space,
Ere I behold thy beauteous face;
In one bright moment shall be trod
The pathway to the throne of God."

He soon revived in some degree, and ought to have confined himself to the house, but such confinement was to him particularly irksome. With an impatience and wilfulness which no counsel could control, he resolved to be present at and to perform his promised and announced part in the recognition of the Rev. Thomas Jones.

This recognition took place at Bedford Chapel, Camden-town; on which occasion Mr. Eusebius Smith declared, that "The Rev. Dr. Leifchild had first suggested the propriety of endea-

vouring to get Mr. Jones to Bedford Chapel." It was, therefore, but natural, now that this suggestion had been acted upon, that Dr. Leifchild should specially desire to address the congregation. He spoke with the consciousness that he should not see another December on earth; and that not only was he then addressing a congregation at the close of the year, but not very far from the close of his own life.

The following was the substance of what he then delivered:—
 "The present is an age of great reading, great research, great intelligence. Persons are rising up in all classes and conditions in quest of information, and are obtaining it. That prophecy is fulfilling now:—'Many shall run to and fro, that knowledge may be multiplied,' and it is diffusing itself in every direction. Now the ministry must keep pace with this increased intellectuality. I mean in its *mode* of representing truth—not in altering or modifying the truth itself—but in the manner of representing it, which must take the types of thought prevailing in the present age, and not the old stereotyped forms which must be laid aside. New types of thought sway successive ages, and a man to be successful now must have the types of thought that are the character of the present enlightened age; otherwise the ministry will sink behind in its rank of instructing mankind. But I believe that this will never be suffered to be the case. Nothing will ever be found to supersede the public preaching of revealed truth by men properly qualified for the work, and appointed to the office as God's great instrumentality for the conversion of the souls of men and the regeneration of the world. No other means of instruction—no meetings of whatever kind—no form of excitement will supply its place, or compensate for its absence. Preaching must ever be the prominent instrumentality. I think, therefore, that it is a great comfort to those of us who are going out of the world,—I am sure it is to me,—that I leave behind me so many faithful preachers of revealed truth, and especially in this neighbourhood, several of whom I have known for years, and

some of them from the beginning of the rise of their present flourishing congregations, and I rejoice in their efficiency and harmony. Others will be preaching Christ here when we shall be praising Him in yonder bright realms—preaching Him in greater force and with greater fervency than we have done. Our brother comes to unite with and assist his brethren; not to get people from other evangelical congregations, which is a poor way of increasing a cause, but he will have a people belonging to himself, on account of his originality, peculiarity, and earnestness. Such will be attracted to him, and he would wish for no other;—I know I should not. I feel that I now ought to stop. I am nearly eighty-two years of age, and I do not know that I shall ever have another opportunity of speaking for my blessed Saviour. I will only add a few words. Christmas Evans said, when he came down the pulpit stairs at Swansea, ‘This is my last sermon!’ and it was so. Very soon afterwards, such was his infirmity, that his brethren were gathered around him, and he feebly said to them, ‘Brethren, preach Christ to the people. Look at me, in myself a ruin, in Christ salvation.’ He then repeated four lines of a Welsh hymn, which my brother Jones would do much better than I can, and said a few more words to the people, and then he used a most remarkable and characteristic expression; he said, ‘Good bye, drive on,’ and died.—John Rees, the Welsh minister, of Crown-street Chapel, was a very popular man, because of his earnestness and zeal. I heard that he was dying, and I went to him, and I said, ‘Do you know me, Sir?’ ‘Yes,’ he replied. ‘And now,’ said I, ‘my dear friend, what is your hope?’ He signified a wish to be raised up in his bed, and, being propped up by pillows, he looked at me in the most serious and solemn manner, and with a lifted eye and outstretched arm, he said these words, which I took down immediately afterwards:—‘Christ,—in the divinity of His nature; Christ,—in the perfection of His atonement; Christ,—in the prevalence of His intercession; and Christ,—in the love of His

heart, and in the power of His arm,—is the rock on which I rest; and now, Death, do your worst.' And that is *my* confession."

Another spring now brought its bright sunbeams and blossoms, and though so soon about to close his eyes upon all the seasons and scenery of earth, yet the invalid felt a restlessness which always accompanied the vernal time in him, and no one could overrule his resolve to go out of town. Encumbered with years, encumbered with baggage and appendages, and impatient as a child, in May he set out for Norwood, and there passed some weeks of partial enjoyment. There, too, he wrote the following, which proved to be his last letter on ministerial business. It was addressed to the successor of Dr. Collyer, who had urged him to attend a meeting convened with a view of suitably commemorating that once popular preacher:—

"NORWOOD, *May 10th*, 1862.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—The aged ones are fast leaving us. They are all gone or going to the world of light, and those few of us who remain are loudly called upon by this gathering in the skies, to be binding up our sheaves and listening for the summons to join them.

"Dr. Collyer was one of my earliest associates in the ministry, and a man who never refused me, or any one, a favour he could confer, or a ministerial gratification he could impart; the memory of which, though he is gone, remains embalmed in the hearts of thousands.

"Your friends have done themselves great credit, with yourself and others, in the proposed memorial. They have for ever exploded the fallacy of the saying that a man's virtues are forgotten when his remains lie low in the dust. On the contrary, they are then seen to shine out with a newer and brighter lustre through the vista of the tomb.

"Yours truly,

"J. LEIFCHILD."

He returned to his residence, partly refreshed, yet presently to die. When the hour of his death really approached, he was

fully prepared for it. So long had it been anticipated, so gradual had been his descent into the dark valley, that he had familiarized himself with its dread shapes, and strong faith had deprived it of half its terrors. In the previous year he had exclaimed, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death—only a shadow, not death—walk through—but I now and then stand still, and look around on the prospect behind and before me." He had also said, "I heard the voice of harpers harping on their harps; and I heard them sing; and this was their strain:—'Jesus, the Prince of prophets; Jesus, the Priest of all true worshippers; Jesus, the mystic ladder of ascent to the Deity; Jesus, one with the Father, through the Divine Spirit—one God for ever. Amen.'"

One morning he said, "I awoke this morning with an indescribable springing of my heart to God. 'O God,' I cried, with a transport I had never felt before, 'thou art my God.' These are sweet days; my last days are very sweet to me." Such was a specimen of his morning thoughts, and the following were the closing expressions of an evening:—"O, thou glorious, thou blessed, thou beautiful God—scenes of glory await us which will surprise us that we thought so little of them here. O, this blessed Bible! I should like to die with it in my arms. I am thankful, O, so thankful that I shall have a whole eternity to adore Him for His amazing love. How I shall shout His praises to the assembled hosts! But oh, eternity itself is too short to show forth all His praise. O, the glory of His power! In one moment He can dart such energy into a human soul as shall make it easy to go through fire and torture to Him."

It was to be expected that so persistent a singer and reciter of hymns through his life should remember and repeat many during his last days. "So many hymns," said he, "crowd on my mind, that I find it difficult to avoid confusion. Blessed be my God, that my heart and lips have caused His name to be reverberated by many hundreds who are now, perhaps, repeating it in

sweetest cadences." Favourite passages from "Paradise Lost" also occurred to his recollection; and the very night before his last, he distinctly and correctly repeated one of these.

Through that night he passed with much restlessness, and on Sunday, June 29th, it was evident that his end was close at hand. Broken sentences of peace and some of joy came from him at intervals. To his niece he said, "What! don't you hear it? don't you hear it?—those beautiful harps!" And then, as if losing all cognizance of this world, he added, in soliloquy, "You can't all go in with me. I must go first; but keep close behind me, and open the gates wide, wide, wide, for all."

Towards night he became very feeble, and was almost exhausted. Yet he said to his niece, "Write;" and then proceeded thus:—"First, have a great aim in life; second, try to please God; third, shine; but I think that will do now." Amongst his last words to his son were those quoted at the close of this memoir.

At night, while all in the house were standing around his bed, that great change took place which to the multitude is so insignificant, to the individual so momentous, to the spectators so solemn.

It came—the long suspended blow—at last;
And Death upon those features, pale and still,
Had laid the impress of his fingers chill;
Then time for him, and joy for me were past.

The hour and day of his death were as though designedly appropriate. The day was a Sabbath; the hour, its close. That time was the one which, for fifty years, had been the working-time of his ministry. That day had always been the source of his private anxiety and the time of his public triumphs. Most appropriately, therefore, did his life terminate on a Sabbath night. About the hour when he left this world, he had for many past years finished his public ministrations, and was usually relaxing his mind by social intercourse, either in his own house or in that of some chosen friend and family. For many years it

was about this hour that he felt he had done his day's full duty, and might lawfully enjoy the intervening hour or two ere he went to rest; and now about the same hour he entered into his final rest, having finished the work which his Lord had given him to do. At this time, formerly, he had put off his pulpit-robcs; at the same time, now, he put off the garment of his mortality. At this time, formerly, he had become a cherished guest in an earthly household; at the same time, now, he became a member of the heavenly family.

It was a sad and solemn time to those who stood around that now lifeless body. To the world, his death was an ordinary event; to those who dearly loved him, and whom he so dearly loved, it was a loss irreparable, though long anticipated. Afterwards the silent chamber, the voiceless rooms, the portraits of the departed, the books he so lovingly perused and so long preserved, the piles of manuscripts which he had so laboriously, and often, alas! so illegibly penned,—were all so many mournful tokens of a solemn severance between body and spirit, of a lasting separation between things temporal and things eternal. These tokens, as often as they were looked upon, brought him back in imagination, but nothing could restore him in reality. They were like the implements some great master had left. With them he had triumphed in his calling. In the midst of them he had felt and asserted his mastery. But when his hand fell powerless at his side, what were all these things but tokens of a departed power, a prostrate form, a missing master, relinquished labours, and accomplished purposes?

Impressed with such feelings as these, the following verses were written, and may serve simply to record the emotions of the hour—yes, of many hours—when no human being was at hand to counsel or console:—

Thy presence lingers in the lonely room;
Thy cheerful song still haunts the trembling air;
Imagination views thee in the gloom,
But wakes to find nor song nor presence there!

O, thought of self, in all our sorrow deep !
Why mourn the parting, when the parted gain ?
Shall one still toss'd upon the billow weep
To see another's bark across the main ?

Go, noble man ! thou hast not lived in vain,
Earth bears thy blessing—words that will not die
Rest in her bosom, like maturing grain,
To ripen for the harvest of the sky.

Go, noble man ! to hope, and not to fear,
To die, and then be deathless evermore ;
To find the clue to what perplexed thee here,
To knock—to pass through Mercy's open door.

Go, noble soul ! thy faculties unfold
Beneath the sunshine of eternal day,
Where death is not before thee, as of old,
And knowledge dreads not sorrow or decay.

Go, noble soul ! in nobleness aspire
Beyond or solar height or starry plain ;
Bow in the presence of the Eternal Sire,
Join in the new and far-resounding strain.

Go, noble man ! fond memories round thee cling,
And sad Affection lingers at thy grave ;
Yet would not back to earth and trouble bring
The form that to herself her being gave.

Through all her tears she gratefully describes
Thy spirit ranging in a boundless sphere ;
There its true home, and there its guerdon lies ;
She cannot, dare not, will not wish thee here !

Yes, when reason had regained its sway over inevitable sorrow, who would recall such a man from such a reward as his ? To depart and be with Christ was far better. There he had much to enjoy ; here he could only have had much to endure. There lay his crown ; here lay his cross. There his affections ; here his sufferings. Who, then, would dare to recall him ?

In the retrospect, too, of his life, and all the circumstances of his departure, what better could have been wished for him ?

Life had been greatly prolonged; death had been twice deferred. Decay and disease had robbed life of its pleasures, and death of its terrors. The accumulated burden of the one had made the blow of the other appear less cruel. What more could be asked, or even expected, on his behalf? Death to him was but the setting of the sun on an autumnal day. Many long and happy summers had been granted; many ample spiritual harvests had been gathered in; and during the autumn of a serene old age, gradual gleanings had followed upon regular and rapid reaping. Why, then, should not his less ardent and less glowing sun descend as though upon a brief November day? It did so descend with a light clear though feeble, with a setting glory rich and radiant, though less brilliant than that of high summer. The radiance was mellowed; the slanting rays did not dazzle; the enrobing clouds did not fling back imperial splendours. The whole scenery was milder, but still majestic; it was tender and touching, it subdued the spirit of the beholder, it softened his heart; and all was attuned to the late season of life and the lingering interests associated with a once great mind and noble intellect.

More could hardly have been accomplished in a single life to prepare for a pious death. Greater guileless enjoyment could hardly have been the lot of any man. He had been gladdened by the highest human satisfactions; he had received the purest testimonies to labour well bestowed, to life well spent, and to duties conscientiously performed. Though born in a humble sphere, he had been raised to a conspicuous elevation; though bound to handicraft in his youth, in his middle age he stood on a pinnacle of public observation. Like that great apostle whose life he so loved to delineate, and whose spirit he so earnestly desired to imbibe, he knew what it was to work with his hands for a livelihood, and yet he knew what it was to command the rapt attention of thousands, and to declare with abundant blessing the unsearchable riches of Christ. Though from the

first dependent for his sustenance either on the labour of his hands or his head, he had never been left in penury; in the long retrospect he had "wanted no good thing." Though by nature disqualified for self-obtrusion, he had been highly and honourably promoted by Providence. In every perplexity he had experienced relief, and from every great danger he had obtained deliverance. He could look back upon all the long way by which God had led him, and trace His hand at every turn. For numerous years he had implicitly trusted in a righteous Providence, and that Providence watched over him in life, and led him gently up to almost painless death.

Above all these things, which were personal, he could hardly have passed a life more largely and lastingly beneficial to others. For himself, indeed, and for his own, but not for his fellow-men, he might in some other professional walk have done great things. At the bar, in all probability, he would have made a distinguished name, and reaped an ample income. Lawyers who heard him in his best days, in Kensington, Bristol and London, expressed their opinion that as an impassioned pleader he would have had few superiors. But he did it not for a corruptible crown. He looked beyond all the crowded assemblies of earth to the heavenly company of witnessing angels. He had his tastes, like others, and would have delighted to indulge them. He had his crosses, like others, and patiently did he bear them. If he knew not worldly prosperity, yet he had compensations in mind, if not in kind. His fortune was his faith; and in this one secret lay his disregard of wealth, his soul's soundness, and in part his body's health. Yes, his fortune was his faith—a faith which nothing could shake; not a faith which was foolish or fanatical; not a faith which did dishonour to reason, and had recklessness for its neighbour; not a faith which mated itself with sloth, and thought that ends could be secured without means; not a faith which built itself upon misconceptions of its Author, and misinterpretations of Scripture; but a rational, well-considered,

firmly-rooted principle, which interwove its strengthening fibres with all his inward growth, and, like some luxuriant evergreen, twined round the crumbling ruins of his old age, and displayed vigorous vitality even in the midst of decay.

But if his faith was his sole earthly fortune, it was accompanied with some few earthly blessings even better than fortune. He had a sanguine temperament which nothing could depress, and a vigorous constitution which for long years threw off sickness and disease. Ministerially he had many signal advantages. He had co-operators who loved and respected him, and laboured heartily with him. He preached to large congregations of his own gathering. He has often declared that he never asked a human being to hear him, and never solicited one to remain in his chapel. He was directly helped of God from the first to the last. In all his removals and in all his public engagements, every honour and every opportunity came unsought by himself. He was wont to boast that, often as others had sought his recommendation, he himself had never requested a brother minister to introduce him to public notice. From College to Kensington, from Kensington to Bristol, from Bristol to London, from London to Brighton, and from Brighton again to London, every movement had been entirely apart from his own seeking, except, perhaps, the last—the return to London—which was in truth a personal and private arrangement. This, in a ministry of about half a century, was something unusual indeed, and offers a striking contrast to the numerous instances in which he extended his own hand in all directions to help his brethren.

Early, too, in his public ministry he began to gather up those fruits of it which subsequently grew around him in most grateful luxuriance. Indeed, his spiritual fortunes were directly in contrast with his private ones, and were from the first promising, and to the last prosperous. The particulars appear in preceding pages, and need no repetition in this. In brief, through all his public life he was an eminently successful man, and finally left

a name upon which the shadow of disgrace never rested—a reputation which none will strive to diminish—a memory which none will dare to dishonour.

Had he died earlier, his fame, perhaps, might have been even greater as a public man, though it would have lacked the added lustre of a venerable old age in private life. Like an aged reaper he lingered, feebly gleaning in that field where he had once industriously bound up ample sheaves. Had his sun gone down before, many more of those who knew him and revered him would have witnessed its setting, and have wept in the after-shadows. Many more would have publicly testified to its meridian splendour, and would have gratefully attributed their highest joys to its awakening influence. But when that sun went down, as if in an autumnal declension, the forest of human life across which its last beams flung a tender glory, had already lost numerous leaves, and its pale yellow lines of parting gold were visible through a death-stricken grove. There and then the voices of vernal nature were mute, and the songs of happy summer were silenced. How many of those who had once grasped the extended hand of that eloquent teacher now lay beneath the ground! How many of those who had often met his cheering smile with responsive gladness had long preceded him, as if to prepare for him a heavenly welcome! How many of those who had once sobbed out their sorrows into his attentive ear, and who had found how sincerely he could weep with those who wept, had gone far away into that happy land where there is no more sorrow and no more weeping, for there death is no more, and the tear is wiped from every eye! So to speak, then, he gat him up alone into the mountain to die; he passed grave after grave as he ascended to the heights, while the world that thought not of him was lying in diminishing distinctness below; and in company only with a few faithful attendants, he yielded up his spirit to his Creator and Redeemer.

Thus, to show that nothing important was wanting to his private

life, his public service, and his prolonged but peaceful departure, is to assuage personal grief, and to offer public testimony to the grace and the goodness of God. The latter was the great aim of his existence, as he himself so frequently declared. On this account the preceding summary of accumulated mercies may be acceptable. By the rehearsal and the remembrance of these, the depression of solitude, the loss of a father, the departure of a pastor, the silence of a preacher, the deprivation of a friend, may in some measure be compensated to each and all who mourn the death of Dr. Leifchild. Let all such recall these his mercies to memory, while sombre shadows hang around us; let us even ascend beyond their darkness, and glorify God in that our father's and our friend's days could scarcely have been happier, or his principles purer, or his aim nobler, or his general conduct holier, or his labours more blessed, or his name more revered, or his term more prolonged, or his death a calmer close to an admirable and enviable life. Let us then sing—

For such a life we thank thee, Lord—
For such a preacher of thy word;
Thy love he told with every breath,
Thy grace he glorified in death.

About a month before my father's death his brother preceded him into the world of spirits. Though younger by a few years, he had departed first, on May 21st, 1862, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

Thus, the elder brother tarried a little longer on earth, felt that one more of its links were broken, gazed round only on junior members of his family circle, and then began to gather up his own feet, and to expect the inevitable day.

He bore the announcement of his brother's death with unexpected composure. It was, indeed, not an unlooked-for event, though it happened sooner than was anticipated. They had been brothers not only in name, but in reality. It was singular that, though often and long separated in life, they should in their last year or

two dwell near together, on the borders of the same park, and within sight of the same green hill. Singularly, too, at last they often worshipped in the same chapel. Was not all this preparatory to their dwelling together above for ever, and there reverently bowing in the same heavenly temple?

Par nobile fratrum. A noble pair of brothers were they; so remarkable a pair, indeed, is not often seen. Both of them were commanding in person, high in motive, pure in principle, and manly in action. When seen apart they seemed so alike, that my uncle (who was an estate agent and auctioneer) has been addressed about sermons, and my father about sales; yet so distinct were they when seen together, that you wondered they could ever be confounded. Their advances in life were equally though oppositely conspicuous. These two country lads, who inherited nothing from their father but his religion, and nothing from their mother but her humour—these two lads, who acquired the most of what they learned by self-instruction, who had none to help them but not a few to hinder them, who began life with no friend but God, and looked for no favour besides that of Providence—these two young men, slowly, but surely, ascended to the summit level of their respective professions. They earned, moreover, high and untarnished reputations in the great world of London—that arena of the severest struggles and the keenest rivalries.

By indomitable resolve, by unswerving rectitude, by great natural talents, and by laborious self-cultivation, they left to their children a name which is resplendent with a double lustre. The same name was, in the one brother, honoured in the City; in the other, hallowed at the West End. In establishing it no man could charge the one with chicanery, or impute to the other inconsistency. Throughout their lives these stainless brothers could meet without a blush, and at their deaths depart without a scandal. They feared no man, because they feared God. They were one in heart, one in creed, one in Christian hope. Differing

in circumstances they agreed in principles. The layman had the advantage of the minister in things temporal, the minister over the layman in things eternal. A partial compensation for the layman's advantage was made to the church; for there, while the preacher gave out of the treasury of his mind, the layman was not backward with his means. Thus, from each of them, the Church gained an appropriate advantage. The prosperity of the one brother, and the ability of the other, were freely laid upon the altar of the sanctuary.

Two notable men, indeed, were these brothers; two glorious lives did they pass, and these were crowned by two happy deaths. Their lives may be likened to two majestic branches of the same river, divided below its fountain-head. These flowed separately in a long and devious course through diverse districts. Sometimes they seemed to be approaching each other, at others they receded. The one stream always reflected heaven in its pure waters, the other was often overarched with obstructing foliage, and only occasionally gave back the mirrored skies. Both streams at length approached more nearly than ever before, and when at last the murmurs were heard of the great undiscovered sea before them, these long-divided rivers re-united, and together rolled into the ocean of eternity!

Who that had walked along their banks, who that watched from the shore their final reunion, and their united and gentle fall into the dread mysterious deep, would not exclaim, "In their lives they were lovely, in their deaths they were not divided"?

Upon Dr. Leifchild's decease no desire for a public funeral existed in any breast, and certainly the deceased did not anticipate or wish for it. Nevertheless, such a man could not be interred without the presence of a select company of his brethren in the ministry. Several of these attended and took part in the service held at the chapel of Abney-Park Cemetery, near Stoke Newington. Many more would have attended but for previously-

made engagements. When the corpse was removed from the chapel, a considerable number of persons followed it to the grave, notwithstanding copious rain. A deputation attended from the Evangelical Alliance, and many a tear dropped upon the coffin when it rested in the earth.* A few heartfelt sentences were expressed at the margin of that grave, and a solemn farewell was then taken of one who had been made a signal blessing to thousands in his generation—of one concerning whom any formal funeral eulogy would have been superfluous—of one to whom no funeral pomp could have contributed greater honour than he had long received from all who had heard and known him.

With what intensified emotions did the chief mourner sit in the black vehicle as it passed back through the gates of that cemetery! He and he alone was cognisant of a fact that invested the mournful ceremony of that day with a double solemnity. Twenty-two years before, in the very same month of the year in which Dr. Leifchild himself died, he whose mortal remains were now consigned to the tomb, had passed through these gates with the remains of another minister, and *that corpse was the first ever interred in this cemetery.* On June 2, 1840, Dr. Leifchild was the officiating minister at the funeral of the Rev. James Mather of Clapton. Between the date of his interment and that of my father, *the number of burials had been no less than twenty-nine thousand, three hundred and fifty-nine!*

How significant of mortality was this fact! how impressive became the whole scene in the knowledge of these figures! The burier was now buried; his voice was now silent; over his remains younger men had officiated.

* The following ministers took part in the solemn service in the chapel, or joined with others in the procession to the grave:—The Revs. J. Graham, W. Brock, J. Jefferson, Dr. Tidman, J. Harrison, Professor Godwin, Thomas Jones, Newman Hall, J. Baldwin Brown, Thomas James, and W. M. Bunting. Amongst the attendant laity were John Finch, Esq., and several deacons and friends from Craven, Bedford, and other chapels.

In the apparently short interval between the death of his brother minister and his own, a wide field had been thickly sown with the dust of mortality. In that too rapidly elapsed space of time, nearly thirty thousand souls had left their perishing bodies in one cemetery alone. Here, then, was a definite enunciation of the brevity of our fleeting days, an affecting addition to the otherwise sufficiently affecting ceremony of that gloomy hour. Two servants of God had, as it were, hallowed the ground; the one by his earliest interment there, the other by this sad day's entombment. Thousands had passed through the dark valley in the intervening time. Thousands had followed the first and preceded the last, yet a link of fellowship seemed to connect these two men. The voice that had spoken over the first-made grave was now hushed in the depths of the last-made. The voices of those who now lay in both had proclaimed on earth the Resurrection and the Life,—the souls of both were now in Paradise, awaiting the resurrection unto eternal life!

Of all the epitaphs which might have been selected for Dr. Leifchild's tombstone, I should have been disposed to suggest the briefest, and yet perhaps the most expressive; and it would have been this:—

HIC CINERES, UBIQUE NOMEN.*

His ashes here, but everywhere his name.

Another, however, was preferred, and it was an exclamation of his own, uttered at Norwood not very long before his death. That expression, so characteristic of his habitual state of mind prior to his departure hence, was finally decided upon, and Affection and Art have combined to distinguish the spot where his mortal remains repose in the cemetery at Abney Park by a

* Though this would have been an exaggeration, if prosaically judged, so also is it where it really stands—on the monument of Marceau, in front of Ehrenbreitstein.

tasteful monument. There an easily discernible marble cross rises from a base which has upon its front the following significant inscription :—

In Memory of

JOHN LEIFCHILD, D.D.

WHO DIED IN LONDON ON SUNDAY, JUNE 29th, 1862,

IN THE 83d YEAR OF HIS AGE ;

WHOSE FAITH FOLLOW,

CONSIDERING THE END OF HIS CONVERSATION,

JESUS CHRIST.

**I WILL CREEP AS WELL AS I CAN TO THY GATES ;
I WILL DIE AT THY DOOR ; YEA, I WILL BE FOUND
DEAD ON THE THRESHOLD OF THY MERCY,
WITH THE RING OF THAT DOOR IN MY HAND.**

His own words.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Analysis of Dr. Leifchild's Mental Characteristics, Opinions, and Personal Habits.

IT has been thought advisable to reserve for a separate section of this volume the more particular and minute consideration of some principal mental characteristics of the late Dr. Leifchild, as well as his personal habits and style of familiar conversation. These things, indeed, have been incidentally touched upon throughout the foregoing narrative, but they are here specifically treated.

One of the first mental characteristics of the deceased that would occur to anyone who knew him intimately was his *INDIVIDUALITY*. This was marked and manifest throughout his long life. Underlying all his occupations, changes, removals, and adaptations to varied circumstances, there was an inflexible individuality which nothing materially affected. Though most men have some measure of this quality, yet in many it is so greatly obscured by change and circumstance as to be scarcely discernible by the common eye. But through the whole life of Dr. Leifchild it ran like a clear vein of metal, inclosed between walls, sometimes of one kind of rock and sometimes of another. Though the vein always ran on with the rock, yet it was always distinct from it. Occasionally it might be obscured, but it was never really absent. The man himself—the interior man—was never to be confounded with his exterior accretions. Strip him of all that simply surrounded him; clear away from his condition

in any place all that was foreign to the real person, and peculiar only to the position or the period, and you would have found the pure and shining vein of individuality invariably pursuing its natural direction, always substantially the same in quality and value.

Although his distinctive character, like that of other men, was built up of successive accumulations of experience and reflection, yet it was so homogeneous that it resulted in a vital and assimilative growth, rather than a mere mechanical addition of increments. Once intimately knowing the man, you might have predicted his mental course even to the end. Added knowledge continually improved, but did not radically alter him. Experience matured him, while circumstances did not master him. In his mature age you might have been sure that he would be sound in the faith, clear in his views, and correct in his teaching, even to the term of fourscore years and ten. Of this you might have felt confident, not from any incapacity in him to admit new light, not from perverse reluctance to modify old opinions, not from ignorant rigidity or unalterable narrowness; but rather from his vigorous grasp of truth at a vigorous period of life, and from his firm reliance upon the truth he had so earnestly sought and so warmly embraced in the full strength of his own deliberate convictions. When you became intimately acquainted with this man you felt assured that of him you would never have cause to be ashamed; that he would not be tossed about by every rolling wave, or driven by every rushing wind; that he would hold his own while he could hold anything; that he had an ideal of rectitude in his own soul, and looked not everywhere *without* to discover how other men regarded him, but first of all *within* to see how he appeared to himself.

Neither could any one fail to observe in Dr. Leifchild an original *TRANSPARENCY OF CHARACTER*, and an unalterable *SIMPLICITY OF MIND*. Truly, "in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in the world." He was so guileless

and direct in his thoughts, words, and actions, that no one could mistake him in anything he did or said, nor could he be misjudged for any voluntary concealment on his part. So manifest were these qualities that it was, perhaps, fortunate for him that he did not continue in business. In that he might have been easily deluded and betrayed, and certainly, like his father before him, he would have made but small progress at counter or in manufactory. He believed every professedly honourable man, and expected all such to believe him. That he was easily deceivable, and sometimes cruelly entrapped by crafty men, might naturally be expected. Had he continued in business with the same unsuspecting simplicity he would have been ruined without doubt. He was no match in subterfuge for the designing, and a mere man of the world would have smiled while listening to his narratives of the deceit and dishonesty to which he had occasionally become an easy prey.

The righteous indignation with which he would to the last allude to his deceivers, was another proof of his simplicity. Some of these, too, laughed at him for the same thing. The man of the world expects, and is prepared for cunning and fraudulent attempts; the man of God was astonished at their discovery, and confounded at his own unsuspectingness. In those instances where persons had employed the language of religion, and professed to be fully under its influence, and deeply indebted to himself as the first awakener of religious thought in their minds, and yet after all had deluded or betrayed him, his wrath was great and energetic, though ultimately subdued. In some such cases he felt deeply wounded in spirit, and could never wholly forget his wrongs, though he had striven to forgive the wrong-doers.

I call to mind an occasion when we had together to settle a transaction with an individual who had lamentably failed in discharging his obligations to one of us. My father said little until one shameful act of dishonour became apparent, when,

looking steadily and sternly in the man's face, he exclaimed, "Is that *your* mode of transacting business, Sir?" The reply was—"Yes, that is the way we get our living." My father turned pale, compressed his lips, rose from his chair, beckoned me away, and said not a word until we were both in the street. Then turning to me with some agitation he exclaimed, "Don't lose your time and temper with that man; we shall live to see him come down."

This last expression was one of his formulæ of consolation under all such injuries; and this again may be regarded by some as a part of the simplicity of his character. He had the firmest conviction that Providence would in due time punish all such men, while the due time he himself was apt to circumscribe within his own lifetime. And it was remarkable how often the event justified his indignant predictions. At the close of life he would not unfrequently detail instances of past wrong-doing by particular persons towards himself or his relatives; and he could then point out, in a manner that seemed wonderfully to confirm his creed of a ready and righteous retribution, the fall and exposure of these very persons. He referred to them by name, related their temporary triumphs over him or his friends, their subsequent prosperity for a period, the honour or credit they had gained amongst men, and then at last the sudden disclosure and the sad downfall. And with reference to one or two later instances of wrong-doing, not only did he live to see the fulfilment of his prophecies; but their fulfilment in a manner so unexpected and signal that the veriest unbeliever in a particular Providence would have felt his unbelief hard to retain, while my father narrated his experiences and produced unquestionable facts.

Notwithstanding these occasional instances of fraud and betrayal, the native simplicity of my father's character was never altogether destroyed. He still had faith in the goodness of some, if not of many, although grievous failures had previously troubled him. Such a faith has its obvious advantages, for it

enabled him to maintain hopeful views of human nature, to look abroad and converse with cheerfulness, to persist in believing that not a few loved him, that time had sifted out his true friends, and separated the chaff from the wheat; and that although he had been sometimes foiled by artifice and chicanery, nevertheless there was enough honour and hearty affection still remaining in the world for him and his. In this he was transparently to all an unworldly man, simple in his virtue as an old Roman, and as unfit to cope with clever and sharp men as they were to appreciate his singleness of aim and life.

THANKFULNESS AND CHEERFULNESS were conjoint habits of his mind, of which, however, we may speak separately.

Thankfulness would naturally accompany cheerfulness in a Christian. Being cheerful, he became thankful; having become thankful, he could not cease to be cheerful. Habitually he "gave thanks for all things to God;" and did so as recognizing the direct descent of every blessing from the Giver of all good. Not the least of God's gifts to him was a grateful heart, which drew constant motives for thanksgiving from his well-stored memory. That memory was a register of mercies, and his life, therefore, was a continual acknowledgment of goodness. "Surely goodness and mercy," he would often say, "have followed me all the days of my life."

He had a happy art of detecting causes for thankfulness in all events, and of finding compensations for nearly all the evils which befell him, in the absence of those calamities which might otherwise have happened. "If it had not been for such a misfortune," he would argue, "I should have suffered from such another one," referring to some greater evil; and thus he always endeavoured to convince himself, whenever affairs wore an unfavourable aspect, that they might have been far more unfavourable; and that if he had not been checked or disappointed in one direction, he might have been more abruptly

checked or more severely disappointed in another. He had so accustomed himself to this kind of compensative estimate of all misfortunes, that I always anticipated his mode of treating every complaint I made to him; and I was always sure that his ingenuity would be readily available in discovering the most favourable side of whatever might present itself. Where others were mortified by disappointments and failures, he would endeavour to show that successes would have brought their perils or unprofitableness. Hence he could the more easily endure crosses, and regard afflictions as blessings in disguise. The most ordinary expressions of thankfulness, too, on his lips ceased to be formal, and were always evidently heartfelt. This was noticeable in many minor and daily acts of religion, as, for instance, in the emphasis which he invariably placed on the word *kind*, when, in the common practice of saying grace, he would refer to "this *kind* supply of temporal blessings." He invoked a blessing at table, not so much from habit as from a sense of need, and always with fresh feeling as well as solemnity.

A much-prized book, that exactly expressed his views, and perhaps partly prompted his practice in this direction, is entitled "The Journal or Diary of a Thankful Christian."* This rare volume, and beautiful as rare, was much in his hands. It enjoins the keeping of a diary—a practice, indeed, which my father would have adopted, but which his engrossing engagements never permitted. His well stored and retentive memory, however, was his own best diary. Therein was written every principal deliverance and every remarkable mercy of his life, from boyhood to old age, and on the tablets in which they were

* "The Journal or Diary of a Thankful Christian, presented in some Meditations on Numbers xxxiii. 2, by J. B. (i.e., John Beadle), Master of Arts, and Minister of the Gospel at Barnstone, in Essex. London: printed by E. Coates, for Thomas Parkhurst, at the Three Crowns, over against the Great Conduit, at the lower end of Cheapside, 1656."

so faithfully registered he read and re-read them from time to time, and blessed God again, and often aloud, upon every fresh perusal.

Conjoined with thankfulness was his equally habitual *Cheerfulness*. A minister of an analytical and unimaginative cast of mind, who had once spent an evening with us, remarked to me, as I afterward walked home with him, "Your father's cheerfulness is wonderful—he must have a very clear conscience." All who consorted with him were struck with this habit. Wherever he was, his cheerfulness diffused itself around like a precious odour, and it soon became irresistibly contagious. Graver men, in his presence, relaxed their rigid composure; morose men were sometimes compelled to smile; and even they who had no sense of humour and no appreciation of innocent gaiety, found themselves so pleasantly rallied, and so speedily enlivened, that they also were, in despite of themselves, charmed and cheered.

His cheerfulness was partly natural and partly cultivated from a sense of Christian duty. In support of the view that it was partly natural, his own words may be employed:—"I have ever been of a naturally cheerful and sociable disposition. I inherited a constitutional hilarity and vivacity from my father, and in my riper years I cherished it from principle, with somewhat of a sanguine temperament." In these words we have a passing delineation of a constantly observable feature in his outward life. It greatly aided his public ministry, as I believe, and made him a welcome visitor in the parlour as well as an acceptable preacher in the pulpit. This may be inferred from what has been previously said, and from something that may yet be said, for it is not easy to separate this feature from the whole contour of his character. It was an evergreen that grew up with him from the same earth, wound lightly round the young sapling, more strongly embraced the sturdy trunk, and ultimately hid the decays of age and the bare years of leaflessness beneath its own unchangeable foliage.

His cheerfulness, being diffusive, was available in his pastoral and personal visitations in general. When he crossed the thresholds of the dwellings of his people or his friends his coming in was as the entrance of sunshine. No inmate who knew him feared him as a heartless inquisitor, and no one dreaded him as a pitiless reprover. If reproof was necessary, it was gravely and authoritatively, but briefly administered; yet it was always followed by tenderness and hopefulness for the future, where penitence and submission were shown by the person reproofed. For a proud and stubborn spirit there was no mercy and no sympathy, but in all other cases both were at hand. In expecting amendment he prepared the way for it, and to the penitent he readily held out the prospect of restoration to Christian society and pastoral confidence.

In cases of conscience, and in difficult conjunctions of circumstances, his disposition to look on the sunny side made him a safe and generally welcome adviser. In the course of his pastorates, extending as they did over so many years, and embracing so many hearers, he had numerous perplexing and very strange cases brought before him for religious counsel. Some of these were the result of morbid feeling, and often of bodily disorder. To all persons so troubled he addressed himself so considerately, patiently, and cheerfully, that many of them expressed themselves deeply and lastingly indebted to him. He dispelled many a heavy and long-lowering cloud, and revived the flagging hopes and quickened the slow footsteps of many a melancholy Christian. By systematically discouraging all exclusively dark and depressing views of religious truth, he did good service to the timid and the downcast. Upon such persons he enjoined abstinence from the perusal of those diaries or journals of believers which disposed to or confirmed religious melancholy—such melancholy, and, indeed, melancholy in general, he regarded as a habit of mind to be striven against with all the vigour and resolution which the subject of it could summon. He regarded it as an

insidious enemy if not at the first boldly resisted, and a fearful distemper if long indulged.

He heartily agreed with the advice given by Sydney Smith on this point:—"Never give way to melancholy; resist it steadily, for the habit will encroach." And again:—"Melancholy commonly flies to the future for its element, and must be encountered by taking very short views of life." "Yes," remarked my father, "that is the way to avoid melancholy. Take very short views of life, because, with the keenest penetration, you cannot see far forward; even with the greatest anxiety you cannot avert misfortunes. But when I say, 'Take short views of life,' I mean on the ground of trust in God, and this has been my practice. Had I fretted myself about my future, I should never have left Bristol, where I might have remained to this day; I should never have taken up Craven Chapel, burdened as it was with a heavy debt, and problematical as were its prospects. I should never have laboured on so long and so heartily if I had troubled myself about my probable fate when too old for the regular ministry. I believe I should have done nothing if I had not taken short views. I knew God would not leave me. I felt assured that He would provide for me, if I spent my whole strength in His service. You cannot have certainty for the future. I have often thought that the result is much the same, as respects things temporal and pecuniary, whether we fret and fume continually or receive things contentedly, and look forward calmly and confidingly. I do not know that, generally speaking, men have much the more at last for all their anxiety; and I am sure that, meanwhile, they have little enjoyment of life. A man of many schemes, and of fruitful inventions for large gains, is likely to have his successes and failures so equally balanced, as to find himself at last in much the same condition as he was at first, with the exception of the toil and vexation of alternate hopes and fears to which he has subjected himself. For myself, I *have* enjoyed life, and am determined to enjoy it still, while God is merciful to me."

He was more than once placed in a very difficult and delicate position, when some despondent and mentally-distempered person called upon him, and, after a little hesitation, would confess that the irremediable sorrow under which he or she laboured was the dreadful apprehension of having been guilty of the "unpardonable sin"—the sin against the Holy Ghost. He had to listen to and advise (I think) more than one or two such persons, and he was led to infer that this dread sorrow not infrequently imposed its burden on morbid minds. With a view to counsel aright all such unhappy sufferers, he was induced to consider the subject of the "unpardonable sin" very carefully; and I have found manuscript notes concerning it amongst his papers. He also published a sermon upon the text, Matt. xii. 31, 32.*

It may be supposed that a minister endowed with so enviable a quality as cheerfulness, was eminently adapted to render a fraternal meeting pleasant as well as profitable, and also to give a happy turn to any dispute or difference of opinion. Accordingly, all his brethren who occasionally associated with him found him to be indispensable to their companionship; and his notes of some of their meetings show that he had narrated, and noted for further use, such anecdotes and illustrative facts as did and would make those meetings both social and instructive.

But it was more especially in the blessed art of *Composing differences and re-uniting long-severed friends* that his cheerfulness stood him in good stead. How many a coolness has he dispelled by a ray of genial warmth and kindliness of nature! How many long-estranged fellow-Christians has he reconciled, and how many precious hours has he spent in that work which has received the special commendation of his divine Master! "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the

* "Sermons: being a second edition of *Abbreviated Discourses on Various Subjects*." 8vo. 1835. "Discourse X.—The Unpardonable Sin."

children of God." I have introduced this fact in connexion with my father's cheerfulness because it, doubtless, contributed to his success as a peacemaker. It was almost impossible for two people to continue opposed when he laughingly held up the cause of their estrangement to the light of reason, and displayed its flimsiness. Causeless foes could no longer frown on each other in the presence of so hearty a mutual friend; and the Christian motives to reconciliation which he earnestly urged, added weight to his wit, and conviction to his cheerfulness. How many alienated friends, especially ministers and church members, he again made one; how many most valuable mornings or evenings he devoted to such endeavours, and how skilfully he brought all his resources to bear upon the re-union of those who should never have been divided, few would conjecture, and none will now certainly know. I have, however, recollections of his long closetings with moody visitors in his several studies at Bristol and in London, and of the re-appearance of the late moody countenances with good-humoured smiles, or at least an evident relaxation of rigidity. If *he* could not reconcile the parties, and if they still resolutely retained their scowl or their scorn, the task was as hopeless as thankless, and no other peacemaker could expect to be successful where he had failed.

As "live in love" was his life-long exhortation and personal practice, so it was among his dying precepts; and a very gratifying circumstance shows that, even after his death, the remorseful recollections of this exhortation produced the desired effect in a remarkable manner as follows:—Mrs. P., who was at a distance from London when she read a public announcement of Dr. Leifchild's death, immediately called to mind his frequent public and private admonitions to cherish love and affection. "Ah," said she, "if the Doctor had now been addressing me, he would have said, 'Live in love;' and how could I bear to listen to such advice when, for years, I have continued to live estranged from my own mother!" Reflecting upon this fact, and

being much affected at the intelligence of her former pastor's decease, she determined to go to her mother and be reconciled to her once more and for ever. Immediately upon her return to London she visited her parent, who had annoyed her daughter, sixteen years before, by objecting to what she conceived to be an imprudent marriage. The daughter had married in despite of such objections, and during all the succeeding years had kept away from her disapproving parent. But now, for the first time after the marriage, mother and daughter were again friends, and gladly re-united the long-broken bond of intimate relationship. So that the mere recollection of the deceased preacher, and the mere surviving impression of his special exhortation, had wrought, after his death, that which his life had so much contributed to promote in all. How blessed, indeed, was this peacemaker ! Even ere his remains were committed to the tomb, the echo of his pastoral injunction sounded forth, and in a new and striking light the "memory of the just was blessed !" One who then, for the first time, felt that she could hear that voice no more, recollected its tones, and the long years during which she had disregarded them. Death gave them a peculiar solemnity ; and thus he who was so eminently a peacemaker in the church and the house during life, was the same, by his influence, after death. Just as he himself was interred, mother and daughter buried their enmity in his grave. Sixteen sad years had these nearest relatives lived as strangers ; for sixteen sad years had the revered pastor's precept been neglected ; but when death removed him, then the long-alienated mother and daughter, with tears of sorrow for his loss, mingled tears of joy for his counsel. To them in particular, and with healing efficacy, "He being dead, yet speaketh !"

Forty years since, he preached and published a sermon on the "Peacemaker's Office and Reward." It has been shown how he discharged the office, and how successfully ; and now let one part of the reward on which he himself has assuredly entered,

be set forth in words with which he was prophetic of his own happiness. "Heaven is a world of peace—a region of love. A note of discord could not be borne there, and the spirits who struck it were expelled the place. With what joy, then, will he be received into that world whose spirit, while here, assimilated him to it, and whose constant effort it was to transform earth into the image of heaven! He has that which is the bond and perfection of all the Christian virtues. His effort to restore peace may have often proved unsuccessful, and his mediation been rejected; but his disposition, his character, will then be brought out to notice by the great Judge, and draw forth His plaudits. He will stand near to the God of peace, and share the honour of those who will for ever emphatically be pronounced "the children of God."

As arising out of my father's predominant cheerfulness, and as forming one of its outward tokens and its expression, I may advert to *HIS HABIT OF SINGING, AND PARTICULARLY OF SINGING HYMNS*. I do not mean his mere joining in this act of public worship, or his combining it with more private adoration; but I refer to a *habit* of singing which, in his case, was distinguishing and unceasing. So long as I can recollect his habits at all, I remember his joyous if not skilful hymnings to himself. I always knew, in his busiest periods, when he had finished his private studies for the morning or the day, by his staves of spiritual song or psalm. After a particularly hard session in his study, he would suddenly be heard to open the door, to descend or ascend the stairs, and, most decided of all tokens of satisfaction with his work, he would break out with some such verse of Watts as this:—

"Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?
Great Comforter! descend and bring
Some tokens of thy grace."

Never did any child of a king, in the poet's sense, go about less

mournfully than the singer now alluded to. Hymns were to him what they had been to Luther and the pious men of all ages of the church. They were the outbursts of a grateful heart, the expression of a joyful inward healthiness of spirit. They came welling out from the fountain of pious feelings, and without thought of time or place. He would sing, in middle-life, like a glad school-boy ; in old age, like a young man ; and I hardly remember anything that so frequently brought tears to my eyes in his later life as to hear that old man still striving, with failing voice but unfailling spirit, to rise to the height of the great argument of the sacred songs with which he had cherished a life-long familiarity. Wherever he was, sing he would ; in whatever place of worship, in whatever vehicle or vessel, in whatever company he might be, the hymn was to him what some personal indulgence is to others. I always fancied he had a peculiarly rich and melodious voice in singing. Others have thought the same, and felt a similar charm.

After he had finished his evening sermons at Craven Chapel, and when that long-remembered and often-referred-to "last hymn" was sung by the vast congregation—who then and thereby recovered from the spell under which the just concluded peroration of the preacher had placed them—many an eye was directed to my father as he sat in the pulpit with half-closed eyes, but with raised hand and rapt countenance, singing with all his might, mingling his voice with the grand chorus of the two thousand fellow-beings before him and around him, and working off his own excitement with the multitude, whose song was as that of many waters. He alone had addressed them for nearly an hour, and now he was gladly but one amongst the many who were completing the service in one harmonious outburst of praise—in one wonderfully stirring and thrilling sacred song, without any instrumental aid.

Nor would *his* singing cease with the night's public service, for I have often known the preacher to sup with Christian friends

and to break out again in singing, hoarsely perhaps, at the time of domestic worship. He would seem to spend his last remnant of vocal power in this last hymn in the house; and after having preached so powerfully, and so long as would have exhausted many men, after having sung so heartily in the chapel as would have disqualified most preachers for more than a low conversation, forth came his subdued and melodious voice once more, uniting, it might be, with the voices of the children of the household he was visiting. Thus he concluded a day of severe and exciting labour with one last strain of praise to Him whom he had been setting forth with all his powers to a charmed audience in a densely-filled sanctuary, and under a heated and oppressive atmosphere.

Often, after he had published the "Original Hymns," did he sing this one of them in the peaceful parlour of his own house, when he reached it on Sunday night:—

"Oh, if there be an hour that brings
The breath of heaven upon its wings,
To light the heart, to glad the eye,
With glimpses of eternity;
It is the hour of mild decay,
The sunset of the holy day.

"For then to earth a light is given,
Fresh flowing from the gates of heaven;
And then on every breeze we hear
Angelic voices whispering near,
Through veiling shades glance seraph eyes,
One step—and all were paradise!"

My father's habit of hymn-singing was perhaps partly hereditary, for his own father had sung at work as well as chapel, and his relief also from exertion, and his resource in anxiety, was to raise a solemn tune. When in peril from the highwayman on Finchley Common, as related early in this volume, my grandfather sought to encourage himself and his son by exclaiming, "Now, child, let us sing Ottford," and the tune Ottford was sung after a fashion of fear and trembling. It required some

faith in the charm of hymn-singing to practise it almost at the pistol's mouth; and, of course, under happier circumstances, the same inspiriting habit was more freely indulged. What contributed to foster and confirm it in my father was the like inclination on the part of my mother, who confessedly had a charming voice, admirably adapted to harmonise with that of her husband. These two sang through life together, and indeed their whole life was a song in many parts, and with many variations. Notwithstanding all the solitudes of domestic affairs, all the concerns of the church, and all the cares which came upon them from unexpected quarters, as well as the unavoidable adversities of ordinary humanity, never was there a more tuneful pair in sacred song. In the earlier years of wedded life their delight was to resort to some rural spot, and there, humbly seated on a river's bank, or on a rough seat, to sing favourite hymns to favourite tunes. I also in due time added my childish, and then my boyish voice. The duet thus enlarged into a trio, and to my latest day I shall call to mind the places which became vocal to our family exercises, and where we poured forth such gushes of holy and artless song as we were skilled to raise.

Once we were singing in happy freedom on the banks of a large river—I think the Thames, near Maidenhead—the following well-known hymn:—

“ There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

“ There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers;
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
That heavenly land from ours.

“ Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.”

Though resting in an unfrequented spot, the singers were overheard by the tenant of a neighbouring residence, who, passing that way, had listened with delight. When they had ceased, this gentleman politely addressed them, and requested a copy of the verses, which he presumed had been composed for the occasion and the spot—so aptly did the richly green meadows on the other side of the river correspond to the “sweet fields dressed in living green” of the poet.

As the hymns of Charles Wesley were the favourites of the family at Barnet in Methodistic days, so they continued to be—at least the best of them—favourites with the Calvinistic son in his manhood. These, then, as well as those of Watts and Cowper, were sung, in groves and fields and near swelling floods, by the tuneful pair in the years when they were active as well as tuneful. But in later life, and after my father had become interested in the arrangement of his “Original Hymns,” the hymns were changed, though many of the tunes remained in favour. Some of these we three have often sung together with one heart. Last of all, we have sometimes looked out together from our window at Brighton, and watched the unclouded sun slowly descending upon the burnished level of the sea, and shedding a fiery radiance far over the trembling waters. Then, each taking a suitable part, we have chanted the following:—

“ God of the sunlight hours, how sad
Would evening shadows be;
Or night in deeper shadows clad,
If aught were dark to thee!

“ How mournfully that golden gleam
Would touch the thoughtful heart,
If with its soft retiring beam
We saw thy love depart.

“ But no; the gathering clouds may hide
Those gentle rays awhile;
Yet they who in thy love abide
Shall share again thy smile.

“ Yea, let creation's volume close,
Though every page be bright ;
On thine, still open, we repose
With more intense delight.

“ Thence through the gloom of mortal things
Thy mercy can disclose
More love than many an angel sings,
For many a sinner's woes.”*

Touching and appropriate as this hymn always seemed when so sung, never more could my father and I manage to sing it through together when *her* voice was mute in death, who had often and long looked out upon creation's volume with us two, to one of whom she had given her heart, and to the other his life. Now the time for united singing was over for ever in this world. Death had broken a string in our family lyre. Nature, indeed, was still the same around us and before us. The same evening splendours were flung in fiery glory on the outspread deep; the glowing billows still rolled in sunny radiance before us; but I could never contrive to sing more than one verse of that hymn with the widower, in that place of gay resort to the multitude, but of sorrowful memories to us. I distinctly remember my failure one Sunday evening, as we *two* looked out again on the glowing waters of the sunlit ocean. My father began the hymn, and though his companion failed, sang it through, and found vent for *his* grief in the successive verses. I believe that in his ability and disposition still and ever to sing, lay one source of his relief, or at least of his ordinary cheerfulness. He sang in youth, in manhood, in the house, and in the church. He sang in sorrow as well as in joy; he sang in sickness as well as in health. In the prostration of disease and in the feebleness of his age he still attempted to sing,

* Original Hymns, No. 321.

and here follow the words of one song chosen in that time of weakness:—

“ With years oppressed, with sorrows worn,
Dejected, harassed, sick, forlorn,
To thee, O God, I pray ;
To thee my withered hands arise,
To thee I lift these failing eyes,
O cast me not away !

“ Thy mercy heard my infant prayer,
Thy love, with all a mother's care,
Sustained my childish days :
Thy goodness watched my ripening youth,
And formed my heart to love thy truth,
And filled my lips with praise.

“ Then, e'en in age and grief, thy name
Shall still my languid heart inflame,
And bow my faltering knee :
Oh ! yet this bosom feels the fire,
This trembling hand and drooping lyre
Have yet a strain for thee !

“ Yes ! broken, tuneless, still, O Lord,
This voice transported shall record
Thy goodness tried so long :
Till sinking slow, with calm decay,
Its feeble murmurs melt away
Into a seraph's song ! ” *

And this they assuredly did. Those broken murmurs, how touching in their very feebleness ! That feebleness, how soon to be succeeded by the strength of one who, having put off the body with its weakness, doubtless joined, and is now joining, in the new song—the song of Moses and the Lamb !

There ran through the Leifchild family *A STRONG SENSE OF, AND NATURAL TENDENCY TO HUMOUR*. It came not from my grandfather, who seems to have been nearly destitute of it. Its

* Hymn by Sir Robert Grant, inserted by permission of Lord Glenelg in *Original Hymns*, No. 342.

fountain-head was in my grandmother, and the stream that was derived from her gushed forth in one of her daughters and in both of her sons. In my uncle it displayed itself in a marvellous aptitude for mimicry. The keenness of his perception of the ludicrous, the flexibility of his countenance, and the conformableness of his whole frame to any desired model, rendered him such a mimic as is rarely seen simply in private. *His* profession admitted of indulgence in sarcastic retort, and was indeed aided by its ready employment.

When, however, religion ruled my uncle's thoughts, he was a mimic and satirist only at home or in private. But the brothers would entertain our united family at Christmas, as probably few families were entertained, and that chill but to us cheerful season was anticipated with deep delight.

In my father the faculty of humour was nearly replaced by a disposition to sarcasm, though it never appeared in his writings, and but rarely in his sermons. The restraint he put upon himself hid it from the public eye, and his predominant desire to live in love with all, withheld him from employing the weapon which he carried in secret. He knew that he had this weapon about him; he knew that he could wound deeply though he only grazed lightly; but he also knew that he would thus have made enemies for life. There were times when it cost him much to refrain; there were persons on whom he was sorely tempted to try his weapon; there were one or two who richly merited his sarcastic surgery, and might, perhaps, have been benefited by it. In private he once said to me of an unworthy person, "How I could have made him writhe." Doubtless he could, and doubtless he would, had he been a mere man of business, or of the world.

Occasionally in his public speeches, and more frequently in his private evening conferences with select and appreciating friends, a word or two of wit or a sly sarcasm were irrepressible—irrepressible also, occasionally, in his week-evening conferences in the vestry of his chapel. To a querulous member of his church,

who objected to the use of the "Original Hymns," because, as he said, the old hymns were good enough, the pastor replied, "I can give you a hymn-book, but I cannot give you taste." To one who found some fault with a sermon he rejoined, "I preached before you were breeched." To a Bristolian who, in that peculiar phraseology which my father greatly disliked, exclaimed, by way of implied depreciation of others, and of self-congratulation, "Sir, I sit under Mr. Thorp," (an extremely corpulent minister,) my father's remark was, "Then I wonder you are alive."

Were I to record some of his quiet sarcasms in the pulpit, they might appear insignificant, apart from the train of observation or argument to which they gave point or relief. Sometimes he did much with a passing sentence—sometimes as much with a peculiar look. It is as impossible to give effect to the one by writing, as by words to convey the other. By these he gained his point, or revived flagging attention, and this was all that such light artillery could accomplish.

On one occasion an effective stroke restored a whole congregation to good-humour and harmony. In the town of N——, where Dr. Leifchild had consented to preach for the funds of a particular chapel, after he had with great exertion secured his object—viz., to kindle the emotions of all his hearers, and to dispose them favourably towards the coming collection—all was for the moment checked by an inopportune performance of an elaborate piece of music by the choir, in which none of the people could join. The congregation looked up in distress, while the preacher looked down in dismay. Everything was apparently lost; the collectors stood ready with shining plates, but the prospects of a scanty collection seemed to be indicated by the disapproving countenances of the silent congregation. It was evident that the musical monopoly in the singing-gallery was extremely unwelcome. The preacher could contain himself no longer, but, rising from his seat, beckoned with his hand, and essayed to speak. "Our friends in the choir," said he, "have

done their part" (they had not half done), "and you must all have been delighted. We have heard quite enough; and I see that many of you are longing to praise God for yourselves before we part. Our turn ought certainly to come now; and therefore I request you to sing with me, to the tune 'Old Hundredth,'—

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, *all* creatures here below."

Immediately the whole congregation seemed alive, and sang aloud. They did praise, all and heartily, and looked up in general gratitude to the preacher. The choir shut up their music-books, the collectors flourished their pewter plates, the people opened their purses, and everybody except the choristers went away satisfied.

His humour never interfered with his religion, but, on the other hand, rather aided his personal acceptance amongst the common people. Men and women, to whom, as a grave and gloomy religionist, he would have been simply forbidding, greatly relished the passing sally of the happy minister. At once they felt at home with him, and he hardly visited any house where he had not an acceptable word for servants and children. "Don't be afraid of the dog, Sir, he never bites," would some door-opener exclaim, as my father was about to enter the house of friend or stranger. "Are you quite sure he never bites?" was his prompt question. "Quite sure, Sir," rejoined the servant. "Then," rejoined the good-humoured priest, "if he never *bites*, how does he live?"

The most ordinary and humble person was sometimes good-humouredly addressed by him; and it is worthy of observation that amongst such persons there remain to this hour those who treasure some sentences which he dropped as he passed them. "Come hither, Sir," began an old Irish woman beside a fruit basket to the writer of these pages; "come hither, now, and wait till I tell you what the ould Doctor said to me one morning when he came along here, all alone too, and nobody wid' him but himself."

Thus the scintillations of his brightness of spirit came forth from him in the daily collisions of common life. They fell, indeed, to the ground at once, like harmless sparks, yet they produced a momentary gratification; and there were few who had once smiled upon my father as he pleasantly accosted them, who did not hasten to meet him again with anticipative smiles. The awe at first, perhaps, produced by his priestly presence soon gave way to welcomes and kind wishes. The sparks of his humour showed that there was a hidden fire within, and that the warmth of kindness and the glow of sympathy were easily to be elicited from that man. Thereby he allured many a stranger to his acquaintance, while he never scandalized weaker brethren by undue levity. He was never, indeed, altogether at home with the needlessly morose, or the religiously gloomy. An unrelaxed countenance was not his choice, and for him an unchangeable gravity had no charm. Still, even the never-relaxing and the ever-grave could but acknowledge that the humour of the man never contravened the holiness of the Christian.

For *HIS LOVE OF CHILDREN* he was often applauded by parents; yet it must not be exaggerated. Children he tenderly loved, when in their best apparel and on their best behaviour. Not only must they always have been good, to ensure his affection, but they must always have continued children. As such they would have been very welcome on Mondays, rather doubtful on Wednesdays, but sternly barred out on Saturdays. On the latter days a melancholy silence ruled his house, and the only child he had was then compelled to abscond into the remotest recesses of garden or garret. No doubt his father loved him; but then, on days of study, he loved him out of sight and out of hearing.

For clever, precocious, pretty, and pious children he indulged a predilection at which none can wonder. For such he had endearing terms and appropriate presents. He would talk with

them for an hour, and teach them with delight. One such had his name recorded in the minister's pocket-book, where I now read it—"Charles, a clever little boy of five years old."

His love was not restricted to mere children, but extended also to ingenuous and religious youth. To young people he was a frequent preacher in public, and an affectionate teacher in private. In the case of children, he was engaged by their innocence and playfulness; in that of youth, higher interests and all the possibilities of a holy and useful life attracted him. Their peculiar perils, their unfolding hopes, their uncorrupted integrity, their buoyant spirits, all exercised a magnetic influence on his mind.

Where particular talents or remarkable piety were apparent in young persons, Dr. Leifchild was one of the first to acknowledge and accredit them, and in the society of such he had great delight. Seldom did he experience more than while in the society of his nephew, William Gerard Leifchild, who manifested considerable talents, accompanied with winning modesty and willing retirement. Out of his own stores of knowledge the uncle communicated largely to his listening nephew, and was pleased to talk with him about books and works of art. When this precocious youth prematurely died, his uncle bewailed his loss, and both uncle and father were involved in common and almost equal grief. The following epitaph was composed by his uncle; and when the father, after a long life, was carried down to his tomb at Enfield, near which his early-lost son's remains reposed, one or two of the mourners stepped aside, and read again the memorial inscription here annexed:—

IN MEMORY OF

WILLIAM GERARD LEIFCHILD,

A native of this place, who was born the 11th February, 1808, and who departed this life 30th June, 1827,

Aged 19 Years and 4 Months.

He was a youth of extraordinary parts; in manners most gentle, in disposition most amiable.

He had attained to a perfect acquaintance with the classics ; he
was well skilled in natural and moral philosophy, and
was in his own mind a repository of
universal history.

Whatever he once attended to he made his own, and never
afterwards lost it.

He saw into nature, men, and things with an intuitive glance ;
yet so great was his humility, that by those who
did not know him he would be passed
over as a sciolist.

The crown of his attainments was a spotless purity of mind, and an
habitual and devout regard to the vital doctrines of Christianity,
and its sublime moral and religious precepts.

Truth, not flattery, has dictated this encomium ; and while memory
remains with the friends who knew him, his extraordinary
worth and excellence will not depart from
the earth.

ACTIVE BENEVOLENCE, arising from deep and warm sympathy, was a prominent but not sufficiently known feature of the character of Dr. Leifchild. No sooner did a sorrowful suppliant unfold to him a distressing tale, than his ear was open and his hand extended. He not only spoke comforting words, but immediately began to devise plans of relief. The exhortations he so frequently addressed to his hearers from the pulpit he himself promptly put in practice in the parlour. He gave freely out of his scanty purse, and fully from his equally scanty time. "Did he," it may be asked, "ever suffer from ingratitude or subsequent forgetfulness?" He unfortunately did ; for sometimes when he had done much it was thought he might have done more, and the lapse of years frequently occasioned forgetfulness. In such cases the superiority of his motives became apparent ; for while he would lament the lack of gratitude or the deadness of memory, he would say, "I did it for Christ's sake, and not for his or hers." "Did he ever suffer from imposture?" it may again be inquired. He did, and that not unfrequently, in his minor charities ; but he acted in the spirit of Dr. M'All's saying, which he entered in his pocket-book :

"I would rather feed three wolves than starve one lamb." In the almost innumerable appeals made to him through his public years for pecuniary relief, he did feed a few wolves, and howling ones, too, but I am sure that he never starved one lamb.

I find among his manuscripts abundant proofs of his benevolence, and of his activity in executing his generous intentions. I also distinctly remember several circumstances connected with such activity in execution. An appeal for pecuniary assistance might be made to him privately in his study or in his parlour. If the case now supposed were one which demanded larger aid than usual, and its peculiarities justified an extended public appeal, his first act, after reporting to me its distressing details, was to note down the names of those who were able, and would probably be willing, to contribute of their superfluous resources. In recording these names he would seek my suggestions, and would always stimulate me by exclaiming, "Come, have you nobody else? Think! think! I want ten more donors." The ten more were finally found; and when some highly-promising name was suggested, he would note it with a glad smile, and say, "Yes, *he* will do—twenty pounds at least from *him*; put him at the head of the list, and let the five-pounders come after him." Gradually the list would enlarge, his hopes keep pace with its enlargement, and his pleasure become plainly visible. Next, the circular must be prepared. How to appeal for help, and yet not to pauperize the appellant, was the question. Soon returned the claims of ordinary duty, interrupted by those of benevolence. To meet these came absence from meals, the locked study-door, stern denial to friends, and enforced silence in every room and every passage. Thus benevolence with him was not the pleasing occupation of leisure, but the interruption of essential study, distraction of mind, and inroads upon comfort and health. He gave not only of his substance, but, as it may be said, of his very self—of his thoughts and of his mental capital—for the relief of his unfortunate brethren.

The annexed principal instances of his benevolent efforts for his brethren in the ministry and other friends are drawn from his own notes, and from letters remaining among his papers. Other minor cases might have been added.

The Rev. Orlando Jeary.—"By preparing from his meagre manuscripts a volume of sermons, and obtaining subscribers at one guinea per volume to the amount of one hundred pounds."* Details need not be added of his labours in carrying out this scheme. John Foster wrote a long and discouraging letter as to the publication of the sermons.

The Rev. J. Atkinson, of Epsom.—"Formerly one of my tutors (the classical) at Hoxton Academy. He was a gentlemanly man, with a serious and even pensive countenance. He had much general information, but was not profound, nor was his scholarship first-rate. It was only sufficient to keep up his reputation amongst the students. While I was at Kensington, he left Hoxton, and took the charge of the chapel at Epsom, where he also kept an establishment for young gentlemen. I visited him, and preached for him several times, but the congregation was always very small.

"At his death he left his wife and family unprovided for, and application was made to me. I at once circulated a printed appeal amongst a large number of friends and acquaintances, and by great labour obtained about *six hundred pounds* for the widow and children. Her receipt and grateful acknowledgments are still preserved amongst my papers."

"For the *Rev. John Thomas, of Founders' Hall*, I succeeded in obtaining about £300."

"*The Rev. Mr. Henry, the minister of Tooting Chapel, Surrey*, was very materially helped by me. He laboured under a dreadful inflammation of the kidneys and the bladder. Having known him at Leith, and afterwards as secretary of the Home

* There is a discrepancy between a note on the original circular and this note, with reference to the amount. In the former he wrote £350; in the latter, £100.

Missionary Society, and feeling much for him, I went to see him, and found that his pains were excruciating, and his pecuniary distress great, and, in fact, his funds were exhausted. Ascertaining who was his surgeon, I repaired to him, and inquired if he were likely to recover. 'Recover!' exclaimed the surgeon; 'if he knew what was before him, he would thank any man who would thrust a knife into his heart!'

"I was so affected with the descriptions of his sufferings that I was haunted by them, and at length fancied I had symptoms of a similar disease. After much nervous agitation, I actually consulted another surgeon of eminence, who, having examined me carefully, pronounced me to be only sympathetically affected, and otherwise 'sound, wind and limb.'"

Dr. Leifchild then proceeded to make an energetic appeal for his afflicted friend. A large bundle of autograph letters, from all the leading ministers, addressed to my father, attest the extent of his correspondence on this painful subject. He notes, as the result, that he was enabled to forward, in all, to Mr. Henry, about *seven hundred pounds*.

Again, in the case of his old friend, the Rev. Dr. R., my father co-operated zealously with Mr. James, of Birmingham, in securing for him a pecuniary pension for his old age. In a letter addressed to him by Mr. James on this effort, and which is now lying before me, he thus writes to my father:—"Do not be weary either in or of this business. It will soon end well. *We have got above the thousand.*"

In a note on this case he observes, "He (Dr. R.) has resigned his pastorate, and an appeal has been made to a large circle of wealthy and influential friends for a testimonial. His people have agreed to allow him £100 per annum, and have subscribed nearly £500 to the testimonial. The whole originated in my suggestion. I have written the circular, and am busily engaged in superintending the affair."

The above were the largest amounts which he obtained for his

afflicted brethren and their families. The instances in which he obtained smaller amounts were not few. Some which he mentioned in conversations he has not noted. One other he has noted, namely, an appeal for Mr. F., a Baptist minister, for whom he collected £100 in a private manner.

To his exertions for his ministerial brethren or their families might be added those which he made for laymen. Of these, the first and most remarkable was that already alluded to in the history of the Kensington period, under the initials C. B., in connexion with Mr. Wilberforce. The amount was *five hundred pounds*.

During his London period, he had become interested in Mr. C., a surgeon of great skill, who had done him some professional service. Falling into pecuniary arrears, he consulted my father, who, with his usual sympathy, entered heartily into his affairs, and at once began to apply to his wealthiest friends. One of these returned the following reply to my father's application, which not only shows liberality in the writer, but a disapproval of liberality in the surgeon:—

“ALBURY PARK, GUILDFORD, 5th December, 1833.

“DEAR SIR,—Although I have been prevented replying to your last letter by much occupation, I did not neglect the essential part, which was to direct £50 to be paid to Mr. Ghrimes at Charing-cross. I greatly rejoice that your kind exertions have been crowned with success. I am told that Mr. C. carries into his professional practice the romance which is so prominent in all his character, and not only attends professional men gratuitously, but construes the term *professional* to mean any man who labours with his head for a livelihood. If this be so, he acts wrong, and should be told so. Perhaps you know whether or not the charge be well-grounded.

“In your first letter you offered me a visit here, which it was not at that time in my power to accept: but if you will give me the pleasure of your company now, any time after Thursday next, I shall have great pleasure in seeing you. I am always,

“Dear Sir,

“Yours faithfully,

“Rev. J. Leifchild.”

“HENRY DRUMMOND.”

In a note to this and other letters, endorsed "Successful applications made by me for the relief of Mr. C.," my father adds, "I obtained for him, I think, four fifty pounds;" and in all, as he elsewhere gives reason to infer, about £450.

In another note, concluding the record of his benevolent efforts, he says, "I obtained the above, besides several collections of smaller sums of £5, £10, £20, and £25; some also to amounts of £30 and £40, after my retirement from Craven Chapel.

"God gave me grace to do this, and favour in the eyes of others for this purpose.

"DEO GLORIA."

To say that he was possessed of great *DETERMINATION AND DECISION*, is only to express in one phrase a manifest characteristic of his entire public career. I have often thought, while reading John Foster's powerful essay on "Decision of Character," that my father exemplified it—of course, in a lower degree than that of Foster's ideal. His mind was not capable of that continued tension and highly wrought resolve which would have placed him in the first rank of heroes; but he certainly did exhibit an amount of decision which distinguished him from ordinary men.

Had he been called upon to act a still more prominent part than he did in the eye of the world, he would, in all probability, have displayed this quality in a still more remarkable degree. As it was, he moved in a sphere where the eye of the world at large did not observe him, and where the original force of some of his mental endowments was restrained or modified by predominant piety. Were it desirable to illustrate his determination more particularly, several details might be mentioned. I recollect, for instance, an anecdote which he told me to the following effect:—

On one occasion he repaired, with the father of the Rev. Newman Hall, to the chapel of a minister at Maidstone, where he had consented to plead the claims of the Missionary Society,

the secretary of which (Mr. Arundel) had forgotten to send previous notice of Dr. Leifchild's intended visit. The consequence of this neglect was that the chapel was closed. Almost any other minister would have gone quietly home, and have borne with the disappointment. Not so did this one, for he determined that the Society should not lose by the neglect of its secretary. He at once obtained the names of the probable donors, and then proceeded to wait upon them individually at their residences. In every house he pleaded the claims of the Society privately, and yet, so powerfully, that when he met the forgetful secretary at a neighbouring town, where the latter had been preaching a regular sermon for the Society, my father found that he himself had collected a larger sum by his private, than Mr. Arundel by his public advocacy.

In his removals from one pastorate to another, the same decision was displayed. In these cases he had to act chiefly upon his own views, and he did so, after due deliberation, in opposition to the advice of some of his dearest friends. In private life, and in circumstances which have no public interest, he was equally decided; and a sentiment which he wrote in his common-place book illustrates his views of resolutions in general:—"Good resolutions must have three qualities—they must be made deliberately, they must propose points of excellence attainable by us, and they must be sanctioned by the rules and examples of God's word. They are in the nature of vows and obligations. Not to make them, argues a willingness to live at random, and to make our goodness a matter of chance; while, to make them without a serious determination to keep them, shows that our ideas of goodness respect its husk and not its fruit.

In noting his *ABHORRENCE OF MEANNESS AND DOUBLE DEALING*, I am only repeating what has been rendered evident in previous pages of this biography, and what may be at once gathered from its tenor. Yet, so prominent a feature in the

deceased ought not to pass without special recognition. A mean-minded man—a double dealer—a man who planned paltry devices, and pleaded paltry excuses for bad conduct and base behaviour, called up the strong passion of my father's indignation. In confronting such a man (and he did confront some such in his later years, as well as in his previous long life), the good man's natural wrath was not wholly under restraint; nor were his expressions particularly polite. He was too manly to say behind such a man's back what he declined to say before his face. To the man himself he expressed his mind and his meaning—little heeding that all his verbal ammunition was perhaps vainly directed against a hide as impenetrable as that of a rhinoceros.

This vain expenditure, however, of ammunition, together with the rhinoceros-like object himself, are of no consequence, further than as they illustrate the noble, manly, and unsophisticated character of the deceased. To him, changing but one word, may be applied the expressive lines of Otway: *—

“You've not forgot our father?”

“I shall never——”

“Then you will remember, too, he was a man
That lived up to the standard of his honour,
And prized that jewel more than mines of wealth.
He'd not have done a shameful thing but once;
Though kept in darkness from the world, and hidden,
He could not have forgiven it to himself.
This was the fairest portion that he left us,
And I more glory in it, than if possessed
Of all that fortune ever threw on fools.”

Again, the words of one of his favourite authors, Sir Thomas Browne,† might well have come from his own lips:—“I would not entertain a base design, or an action that should call me villain, for the Indies; and for this only do I love and honour my own soul, and have, methinks, two arms too few to embrace myself.”

* Otway's *Orphan: a Tragedy*. † *Religio Medici*, p. 176; edit. 1678.

Dr. Leifchild's *Freedom from Bigotry and Narrowness* must have been continually perceived by the reader. It must have been clearly manifest, from the record of his earliest public years, that he was a large-hearted and broad-thinking minister. The founder and early foster-father of the Evangelical Alliance, the prominent and perpetual promoter of Christian union, could have been nothing less, and was never otherwise.

Nevertheless, few knew the opposition and the *vis inertiae*, and the little-mindedness he had to contend with, in proclaiming and giving effect to his expansive principles and his comprehensive purposes. From the time when, as Rowland Hill too plainly expressed it, he had to meet and teach the "stupid old Presbyterians" at Kensington, to the time when he became the bold, popular, and successful adherent of "Union without Uniformity," in London, he endured much in occasional and unwilling association with men of a very different stamp.

Let an illustration be taken from an incident narrated to me by my father, and noted by me at the time. He had to preach, at his special request, for a Mr. Atkinson, a "Particular Baptist" minister, somewhere in Kent. The Sunday was one on which the Lord's Supper was administered, after the usual service, to the members of the church. Dr. Leifchild naturally went from the vestry, to which he had retired after preaching, with Mr. Atkinson into the chapel, expecting at least to receive the elements at the Lord's table, even if he were not asked to preside over their distribution. A long interval preceded this second service, and an unaccountable spell seemed to bind Mr. Atkinson. Silence and quietness still prevailing, Dr. Leifchild bent over to his brother minister, and inquired the reason. "Don't you know?" said Mr. Atkinson. "No, I do not," responded Dr. Leifchild; "what can it be?" With a dejected look Mr. Atkinson rejoined, "I am grieved to say, I dare not ask you to join in this ordinance. You forget that we are Particular Baptists." Particular, indeed! The man who was good enough

to preach to them was not good enough to partake with them! They listened to him as though he were an elect brother, and afterwards rejected him as though he were a graceless reprobate!

That he had also sometimes to contend with men of Antinomian tendencies he himself has recorded, respecting his entrance upon the pastorate at Craven Chapel. To all such persons he had but one reply when they presumed to object to his more liberal doctrine:—"If you do not like it, leave me, and the sooner the better." If they became refractory, the answer was a little varied, and a little more decisive:—"Either you must leave, or I must." This was not a decree that practically admitted of choice, and of course the unsuccessful objectors gradually departed. A few, who might be rich, and therefore highly "respectable," lingered on and attempted insidious countermining. In this they sometimes made unfortunate mistakes. I remember that a wealthy tradesman, who sat in the same pew with myself, when I first attended at Craven Chapel, and before I was generally known, leant over to me one Sunday morning after sermon, and not disdaining even to win over such a stripling as myself, whispered, only not too softly, "I say, young gentleman, this is queer stuff—queer stuff this, is it not?" "No, Sir," rejoined the indignant stripling, "*my father* never preaches queer stuff!"

OPEN-MINDEDNESS (if I may employ a peculiar term), in relation to the largely increasing knowledge and the far advancing science of his time, was a marked feature of my father's character. During his long life, knowledge had spread its ample page to the great masses of society, and had become the possession of many, instead of the privilege of a few. Science had advanced with steps so rapid, and had garnered harvests so abundant from many newly cultivated fields, that a man born in my father's infancy may be said to have appeared in a period of comparative dimness, while an almost millennial glory shone during his middle and old age. In his lifetime, hitherto unknown

worlds had been espied and registered, the earth had yielded the richest and most significant spoils of the remote past, and the deep sea had been sounded and found not to be a lifeless desert, nor to contain a promiscuous assemblage of wandering animals, but to hold most of its organisms in successive zones and belts. In fact, my father was in the position of a tourist in the High Alps, who, after having passed through unknown scenes in a morning mist, gradually sees the divided cloud-veil rolling away, and discovers with astonishment and admiration that he had been walking amidst unconceived magnificence and unsuspected grandeur.

If we continue to reflect upon what had been accomplished in his lifetime, we find that the merest rudiments of knowledge had been expanded into orderly and continually enlarging departments of activity and research. Physical forces had been traced out and traced home; had been severally distinguished and scientifically connected; had been carefully correlated, and their relations so beautifully displayed, that the most secret links of Nature's associated processes seemed upon the point of being discovered, and the long-mysterious harmony of things made audible to the common ear. The half century of my father's unceasing and laborious ministry of religion was contemporaneous with an equally unceasing and equally laborious ministry of science. There had been servants of science as diligent and devoted in their pursuits as this servant of the sanctuary was in his preaching and his pastorate. They were (with one or two exceptions) ignorant of him, yet he was not altogether ignorant of them. He knew something of what they had acutely detected, and something of the triumphs they had achieved. His mind was open to the influence of their discoveries, and though neither his occupation nor his early training permitted of an intimate acquaintance with details, yet results must be and were popularized, and he gladdened himself in this glorious accession of light. He listened with eagerness to the rumours of each wonderful discovery; he read what he could contrive to seize in

an hour, he asked for information wherever he thought he could obtain it, and when an astronomer of practical skill became one of his congregation, he invited him to his house and humbly asked questions, and was only disappointed that he had so much to learn before he could comprehend the information afforded to him by his guest. Like other late scholars he wished to grasp the grand and the striking whole of astronomy without the necessity of minute detail and long preparatory study.

Thus while my father was surviving a generation of mankind, he was at the same time outliving old errors in science, and found himself in the presence of a new progeny of thriving theories and rapidly accumulating facts, to which he was compelled to give some amount of attention, and towards which he was bound to assume a definite and well-considered behaviour.

Now, remembering that he had received a scanty education, that its quality at the best was inferior; remembering also that when he was a ministerial student the discoveries above mentioned were unmade; that books, other than purely theological ones, were rarely within his reach; that scientific lectures were few and feeble; that natural science was hardly studied by any theological professor, or honoured in any theological college; and that the entire curriculum of such an establishment as Hoxton Academy was impoverished and inadequate; remembering these facts, it will be conceded as no slight thing that *open-mindedness* should have continually marked my father's mind.

This quality was manifested in the interested manner with which he welcomed intelligence of the wonderful discoveries made by scientific inquirers and naturalists. His eye brightened, and emotions of surprise and delight were visibly awakened in him as these things were detailed and explained. With a natural bias towards the appropriation of all such discoveries for religious ends, he would immediately seize upon them, and so soon as a scientific truth, having a practical bearing, was made intelligible to him, he would at once point out its possible

theological relations, and its tendency to extend the sway and promote the power of godliness amongst mankind. He held the motto of the founder of the Jesuits, not in its perverted but in its legitimate and highest application. All discoveries and all enlarged knowledge he believed would finally tend *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, to the greater glory of God. To augment that glory, to compel all men and all things to contribute to it, to bring all learning and all science to illustrate it, to educate in things human in order that they might elucidate and corroborate things divine, to concentrate all the scattered lights of intelligence and all the forces of reason on the grand themes of theology was his ardent desire, and his unquenchable hope for the times immediately to succeed his own.

Especially with regard to those discoveries and theories of scientific observers which materially modified some old and untenable opinions on Cosmogony, was his open-mindedness conspicuous. He might, indeed, have continued as narrow-minded as many others on such topics, and as fearful as they were of the increasing glory of science, lest it should tend to the waning of the glory of religion. On the contrary, he felt convinced that they must augment each other's glory, and that the lustre of the one could not be increased by extinguishing the other.

So lately as 1860 we read together and discussed a then new book by Dr. Dawson, of Canada, entitled, *Archæia ; or, Studies of the Cosmogony and Natural History of the Hebrew Scriptures*; and as this author treated his subjects in the light of modern geological science, my father was enabled to apprehend how recent discoveries could, to some extent, be brought to harmonise with a satisfactory interpretation of the earlier verses of Genesis. He had previously read Dr. Hitchcock's volume on the same subject, and freely admitted the unsoundness of his own early views on many points discussed, and the untenableness of many old opinions connected with the Hebrew cosmogony. Although this, indeed, has been a change which has taken place

in numerous minds, yet, as I have intimated, it was the more remarkable in one so advanced in life, so accustomed rather to teach than to learn, and so long previously indoctrinated in antiquated opinions and interpretations. To confess their unsoundness was at least a proof of his candour and docility.

I need scarcely add that to the really irreligious philosophy of the day he was utterly opposed, nor could he by the structure of his mind, his modes of thought, and his deepest convictions have been brought for a moment to entertain anything really hostile to revelation. To say this is almost superfluous, since his life was devoted to the establishment of revealed truth, and his open-mindedness never degenerated into the debility of doubt, or the weakness of a wavering faith. His wish was to reconcile natural with revealed truth, and not to put asunder what he believed God had joined together. He would never disjoin religious and secular knowledge, but rather take each by the hand and place those hands the one in the other. He would have married them into one indissoluble union, and rejoicingly have admired their mutual helpfulness. Their occasional differences he would have composed, their lasting harmony he would have insured, their conjoint usefulness he would have fain promoted to the utmost of his ability.

A LOVE OF SELF-CULTIVATION distinguished the deceased through his long life, and in every stage of it. How much he read was wonderful in the view of how much he did. During nearly the whole period of his preaching days—that is, for about half a century—he may be said to have had but scanty time for miscellaneous reading. Indeed, while at Craven Chapel he had almost none, excepting what he borrowed from night, or seized upon in briefest relaxation, and in an annual holiday of a few weeks; yet even at that time he read something, and to good purpose.

He read all too little, however, of his beloved old Puritans in those busy days. Their unopened folios and quartos were literally standing reproaches. He passed them by every day, and casting

but a longing glance on the letterings of the exterior, he left them like friends he would fain have conversed with in seclusion, though public duty summoned him to its task-work. One page in one day he might peruse, and possibly several pages on each Saturday, but the great machinery of his chapel and its Societies must needs be kept in action, and that machinery would have stopped without its prime mover. *There* the demand for his presence was so incessant and urgent, that he could only bestow a passing sigh on the works of the Puritans, and leave them as undisturbed on his shelves as their authors were in their graves.

Nevertheless he perused some of the books of the day, hurried through a few and read reviews of others, or conversed with friends who had time to spare for a whole volume, from title-page to index. Thus he did not read only for the pulpit. He did not think only of what could be converted into preacher's merchandise. He was not informed merely for the sacred desk, but also for the social parlour. He endeavoured so to furnish his mind that it might present itself acceptably upon every side to many men. Every side was to be polished to its full capacity of brightness; at least such was his desire. It could not be said of him that he was everything in the pulpit and nothing in the parlour; still less could the converse be said, that he was everything in the parlour and nothing in the pulpit.

The mass of manuscripts which he has left upon many subjects and many books, evince his laborious diligence in all directions. He seldom read an elaborate volume without epitomising it, and thereby endeavouring to fix its leading thoughts and principles in his mind. Even in his later years, when no kind of public use could be made of such writing, he made careful abstracts of the principal publications which came before him, and these lie in almost undecipherable bundles around the writer. So far as they can be read, they prove that his curiosity was still lively, his desire of knowledge unabated, and his judgment not materially weakened. In the volumes we read together, or in succession,

his pertinacity in dwelling long upon points he did not understand, and in making out matters to his own satisfaction, though at the time rather trying, now simply remains as a recollection of his individuality and his determined self-cultivation.

That he had an observant eye, and needed little instruction as to "how to observe," his numerous notes of summer tours abundantly prove. To these some reference has been previously made, and they are only here again alluded to in confirmation of the tenor of these remarks. Had he possessed sufficient leisure, and with leisure had he preserved the same restless activity of mind, he would probably have shown to the world that he could become a proficient in other studies as well as theology, and that he possessed other power besides that so signally displayed in the pulpit.

One particular consequence of his general self-cultivation was that he never violated good taste in his public speaking. In his metaphors and his illustrations he was generally correct and appropriate. His similes might occasionally want vigour, and occasionally, also, variety; but they never lacked taste. I do not remember that I ever heard him make use of a low or vulgar illustration. His innate or acquired sense of the proprieties of language always restrained him, even in the very tempest of his passion, from blemishes of this kind. Certainly, in his best years, he could no more have spoken in bad taste than he could have preached false doctrine.

He had a love for aphorisms, and for pithy and sentential books, such as contain the essence of wisdom expressed in terse and antithetical sentences, winged with fancy or pointed with pertinence. All that he could obtain of this kind he collected and fondly treasured, and he endeavoured to cultivate this style of writing, as frequent entries in his pocket-books show. He was, however, unable to devote sufficient time to the condensation of his sentences in order to attain high excellence, and they were, therefore, rather truisms than aphorisms. Perhaps he thought too highly of them, for he once

conceived the idea of publishing them, as the following inscription will show :—

“THE LITTLE BOOK OF APHORISMS.

“These thoughts have suggested themselves to my mind at different intervals through a series of years, and were committed to writing at the time. They have yielded to my own mind some little pleasure and profit, and in the hope of their becoming alike tributary to other minds, I commit them to the press. There is some comfort in the thought that they can be of injury to none; if they are flowers that yield no honey, they are yet without a thorn.”

“June 30th, 1845.”

That self-cultivation was his object, and, indeed, his passion, appeared conspicuously in his latest years. When old age dulled the apprehension, and when life had lost its zest—when there was no longer to him a theatre for action, or an audience for instruction—when his character had long since been stamped with public approval, and when increased knowledge could neither add to his fame, nor augment his usefulness—even then he was a diligent reader, and a deliberate thinker. He read for his own profit, and he thought for his own pleasure. His literary tastes remained nearly unaltered, and he still looked with satisfaction into the folios, octavos, and duodecimos, which had travelled with him from Kensington to Bristol, from Bristol to London, from London to Brighton, and thence back again to London—a long round during a long life. They had been “cabined, cribbed, confined,” by canal, by road, and by railway. They had been packed and unpacked, re-packed and again unpacked, and, at last, like their proprietor, they came back to rest within a few miles of the house in which they had originally found a home.

His *LOVE OF NATURE AND BEAUTIFUL SCENERY* was predominant through life, being often apparent in his sermons, but most frequently in his journeys and ordinary conversations. In him, as in a great poet, the meanest flower that blows inspired

thoughts too deep for tears; but not merely in that poet's sense, for Nature was to my father not so much a sentiment as a religion. Through Nature he looked directly and devoutly up to Nature's God. When her gorgeous page was spread out before him in all its variety and beauty, he, too, felt the inspiration and rapture, even though he could not paint the admired objects with the patient labour and minute fidelity of a pre-Raphaelite artist. He could not bring to them the subtle skill of the accomplished poet, nor could he array them in highly-wrought language, or invest them with the hues of a glowing imagination or a playful fancy. Nevertheless, as a simple, devout, and loving observer of external creation, he stood in forest, field, or garden, ready to ascribe every wonder and every admirable handiwork to the Divine Artificer. He thanked God for the book of Nature as well, though not so profoundly, as for the book of Revelation. The former he read lovingly, because he had read the latter reverently. To Nature he came baptized with the spirit of Revelation; therefore he looked upon all created things as a Hebrew rather than a Greek. To him, the One great presiding mind, and the One omnipotent hand, were manifest in all natural existences and arrangements. "Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing," was his perpetual acknowledgment; and not a bird sung, or tree blossomed and bore fruit—not a grove rustled, or storm raged, or sea rolled in its tides, or river ran in silvery course—not a sun rose or set, not a star shone—neither the glow of the day, nor the glory of the night came before him—without an immediate and unhesitating reference to the beneficent Creator of all.

No such philosophy as that which regards the Divine Being as "the Unknowable," and therefore separates Him from His works—the latter being classed as "the Knowable,"—would ever have found a moment's acceptance at my father's hands. All his thoughts and his aspirations were in a contrary direction. He prayed and observed, in order to know the Creator in part by

His works. He especially loved Natural History, because he saw in its continually unfolding facts and their relations, the presiding mind of the One Intelligence. Every book which illustrated any popular branch of Natural History was, on this account, sure to receive a brief welcome and a passing encomium from him; and often, in later years, when the astonishing discoveries made by means of the microscope in minute structures and previously invisible organisms were explained to him, he accepted them all as fresh revelations of the beneficence and marvellous resources of the Knowable One. The curious structure, for instance, of the eye of the honey-bee, and the recently traced completeness and fitness of its instincts, were to him sources of deep delight, and were at once made to answer as illustrations of the wisdom of the Creator, and the boundless resources of His skill and contrivance. It was gratifying to be able to lay before him copies of several illustrated books on such subjects, and while, of course, the mere nomenclature of science was as hard and repulsive to him as to many others, nevertheless he contemplated the figures of strange creatures, and the developments of their structure, with an almost boyish pleasure. He would point them out to others, and repeat the anecdotes and matters of general interest connected with them. These were a real enjoyment to him, and he frequently proposed public and popular lectures upon them. "Only take a room," said he, "and we will get you an audience. It will be full to the doors. Only tell the people what you have told us."

It will have been inferred from what has been said, that we had many tastes and tendencies in common; and that no small portion of my father's delight consisted in this community of feeling. Books were our common friends, and our dearest friends were the oldest books. With like affection we would gaze on the same illustrated title of a favourite old folio, and the passages pencilled by the father were frequently those which were also noted by his son. If he bestowed upon me educational

advantages which had not been his own, I strove never to forget the bestower in a consciousness that I cultivated a larger field than he did. Who but he enabled me to enter it, who but he toiled that I might learn, who but he sought for me the soundest schools and superior masters? This is not merely my present, but it assuredly was my constantly prevailing feeling; and I can well remember that to him I acknowledged all my obligations, when I laid upon his study-table some richly bound volumes which the Mayor of Bristol had publicly handed to me as an envied but yet hardly-won prize for an original Latin poem.

In his mature and my own younger years, we read together in the broad book of Nature, as well as in the old folios and the quaint quartos. Nature, indeed, was our mutual mistress, and by both of us was equally beloved and honoured. We visited together the same romantic scenery, rambled by the same rivers, skirted the same lakes, paused under the same waterfalls, ascended the same hills, and explored the same caverns. We have paced together on the same shores, we have stood together at the Land's End. At Cape Cornwall we once walked together in the deepening twilight, and when stars began to glisten in the sky, and a multitude of glow-worms, as if in correspondence, to glimmer upon the grass. We communed with our own spirits, and with each other's spirit. We felt all the mystery of the loud resounding ocean in the noiselessness of night. We often walked, talked, and laughed in happy freedom. I never cared to have any other fellow-traveller than my father, and he, naturally enough, only wished to have his only son.

Though long and eventful years have passed away since we took those unrestrained rambles, I distinctly recall his patient pedestrianism and his joyous exclamations—almost as boyish as my own—when the turn of a road brought us within sight of some majestic ruin, or when the last difficulty of a steep ascent was surmounted, and an unbounded prospect opened to us. I recall his inveterate hymn-singing within the ivy-wreathed walls of

Tintern Abbey and Ragland Castle; his waking of the solemn echoes with one of Charles Wesley's verses, and his breaking the silence of the moonlight view by reciting some familiar passages of "Paradise Lost." I distinctly recall, likewise, all the little incidents of his travelling companionship; our free enjoyment at remote resting-places, his conversation with cottagers, his tarryings in farm-houses, his endeavours to get into the good graces of fellow-travellers, his frequent successes, occasional failures, and odd rebuffs; his special delight in domestic interiors, his coaxing ways with stray children, and his fluent flattery of easily deceived mothers as to the beauty of their offspring. He himself was pleased to recall and to recount these things in that evening of old age, when to recount was all he could do, and when our common explorations, enjoyments, inconveniences and occasional perils, were unending themes for conversation, and unfailing sources of amusement.

Nor can I refrain from adding, that while I was recently separated from him for some few weeks, which were passed in a pedestrian tour amongst the High Alps, one principal element of my pleasure was the anticipation of his glad reception of my descriptive letters. By him those grand and glorious scenes were never beheld, but I thought he would strive to realize what I strove to depict. It was as I expected; for on my return, I found that the old fire of youth sparkled up for a moment as I recounted and depicted the grand and the beautiful. When, at his request, I wrote out at length my emotions while passing a night out of doors on a well-known Alpine summit, and while from thence watching the solemn trooping stars, in their wonderful brilliancy, and afterwards the roseate dawn and the flaming sunrise, I could not but think that my fatigues were richly repaid by the satisfaction with which the feeble pilgrim, now so soon about to step into another and more glorious world, listened to the recital of the glories of this world, of the grandeur of night, and the splendours of morning.

I did not, however, tell him one thought which had been almost every evening present to my mind whilst amongst the High Alps. When, standing on some lofty point, I eagerly awaited the appearance of that indescribably beautiful flush of colours which at sunset rests for a few minutes upon peaks of inaccessible height; so soon as it came, with all its unearthly hues, I called to mind a human being—a man of many, many years, on whose head the snows of age had long rested in venerable whiteness, and round which the glory of another world was now softly gathering, even as the Alp-glow mantled the lofty summits of the Bernese Oberland, the soaring Matterhorn, and the many mighty *aiguilles* of Mont Blanc.

It is little to say, but it was something to feel, that when that exquisite Alp-glow had faded away, and when the eternal snows on those soaring summits had regained their pure whiteness—regained it, as I sometimes thought, with a more virgin-like purity than before, and a more intense stainlessness—then the feeble but saint-like father, several hundred miles away, was about to lift up his evening petitions for his absent son; and then the son, so consciously inferior to that distant petitioner in “righteousness and true holiness,” was also about to lift up his voice in the loneliness of the profound valley, for the preservation of the aged pilgrim, far away in space, but ever near in thought. As he looked up to the now star-lit pinnacles of enduring ice, and watched the pale gleams of moonlight stealing down the topmost crags, and streaming along the rifted glaciers, and leaving the subjacent valley in deepest shadow, he realized something of that Valley of the Shadow of Death, through which the one he loved most of all men was soon about to pass; and only prayed that the passage might not begin until he himself had once more looked upon that long-venerated countenance, and talked in confident freedom with that one to whom he owed not simply life, but so much that had made life endurable, and even death but the prospective doorway to a higher and holier existence!

THE BIAS OF HIS MIND WAS PRACTICAL, and not metaphysical or speculative. He had, indeed, attentively read Locke and Butler, Dugald Stewart, and Jonathan Edwards "On the Will." It was not, therefore, incapacity for such inquiries that restrained him from pursuing them, but rather an indisposition to direct his thoughts too frequently to subjects which had no immediate practical bearing. He was far more interested in what stirred the emotions than in what merely exercised the intellect. Hence he escaped that gravity and pensiveness which habitually distinguish those who busy themselves with difficult and vexed questions in morals and metaphysics. It was not in my father's free and social nature to hang upon the skirts of any insoluble problem, or to linger long in dim twilight between the intelligible and unintelligible. When he found himself bordering upon profound darkness, he acknowledged that it was such, and speedily returned to the day. He walked thankfully and contentedly in the light of revealed truth, and both by temperament and lack of leisure was disinclined to investigate profoundly those mysteries which trouble the peace of many, but which were left in peace by him.

Hence I never succeeded, during his maturer years, and the period in which some of those topics anxiously engaged my own thoughts, in interesting or involving him in protracted discussions about them. At any turn of an inquiry which had no prospective solution and few practical relations, he would abruptly, and sometimes authoritatively, rein in my discursiveness. He would not endure the drawing out of a fine thread of speculative argument, but suddenly break it, and exclaim, "What does all that come to? Argue all day, and you will get no more light. I wandered in that maze many years ago, and came out as wise as I entered it."

The manner in which he would deal with, or rather evade, the difficulty of admitting two opposing and apparently mutually

destructive truths or doctrines, may be illustrated by these words in his little book on Providence:—"It is not demanding too much of us to claim the admission of two truths established upon their own appropriate evidences, without being able to perceive their agreement. We may surely see enough of two lines, to convince us of their parallelism—without being able to detect in every place their distance and their separation."

As his bias was not metaphysical, so neither was it in favour of æsthetical religion. To the charm of some few modern writers who have refined upon theological truth, and who have invested it with a sentimental garb, he was nearly insensible. He perceived, indeed, how this might enthrall others, but he himself was proof against it. He showed how it might gratify the taste, allure the fancy, and throw an air of interest around its author; but on the other hand he declared that it would fail to satisfy in sickness, to fortify the judgment, or to inform the intellect. He would then send for some superior book from his own library, and by way of contrast read, or cause to be read, choice passages of practical tendency, of clear style, and of definite aim.

My father's aim was always to counteract indefiniteness by practical godliness, and to contrast vagueness of sentiment with plain but exalted piety. He frequently called for Clark's "*Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in this Later Age*."* In some of the biographies in the first part he greatly delighted, particularly in that of Mr. John Janeway. Nearly every one of the twenty folio pages containing this life bear the pencil-marks of my father, denoting the passages he admired, and the practices he desired to follow. Again and again did he peruse, or ask to have read to him, the remarkable expressions and experience of this mature Christian, who was only between twenty-three and twenty-four years of age at his death.

* The *Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in this Later Age*. In two Parts:—I. Of Divines; II. Of Nobility and Gentry of both Sexes. By Samuel Clark, sometime Pastor of Bennet-Fink, London. Folio. 1683.

The life, also, of Joseph Allein, together with a record of some of his sayings, was highly valued. The paragraphs that met his own views are indicated by pencil marks, such, for example, as this one relating to a custom of Allein. "He was a great observer of each day's providences, and would every night, before he went to sleep, reckon them up to his wife, to raise his own and her heart to praise the Lord, and to trust to Him, of whose care and goodness he had such manifold experience." Something of the same kind, I believe, was my father's own practice.

In the "Life and Death of Mr. Samuel Fairclough," a very instructive biography, he has marked a passage which was singularly applicable to himself at the time he read and noted it. It is in these words:—"This was the last place of his abode in this world. He was above fourscore years old when he came to Stowmarket, until which time his parts and his memory continued sound to that degree as that all men admired him; but after that a great change suddenly appeared, yet not so great but that he still retained his understanding to a very good use and purpose, none coming to visit him but that they went away *bettered* by him. When he was much decayed and almost fallen, the ruins of the building were such as did evidence the fabric had once been large and stately. When his natural heat and fervour was almost extinct, the remains thereof manifested that the fire had been great, where such a heap of glowing embers gave so much heat and warmth."

Several passages might be quoted from the same life which are in the main strikingly applicable to my father, and all of which he read and reperused from time to time. As the similarity of the two men's characters is remarkable, and as the book is not to be easily procured, two or three of these pertinent and rather quaint passages may be here introduced.

"This learned divine (Mr. Fairclough) was, as to his zeal, a most excellent pattern, worthy of all imitation. He was in this

grace, as well as in other things, both a burning and a shining light. Heat and light were never divided in him. His fire sometimes burned very hot, but yet always very clear, and without any manner of smoke. In his love for the salvation of souls he burned like a lamp, consuming himself, his body, and his estate, even all the oil that he possessed, and therein rejoiced if hereby he might guide men to heaven, and might show any one the way to God and glory. And hence it was that a great and learned man, who often heard him, said that no man was more judicious and weighty in the doctrinal part of his sermons, and none could be more affectionate and zealous than he was in the application of his doctrine. Indeed, it is a rarity to find a man of great reading and deep judgment to be endowed with much zeal, or with strong affections; but this man's sacrifices were all kindled with a fire which came immediately from heaven, which did at once enlighten his head, and also inflame his heart."

Then follows this paragraph noted by my father, and truly characteristic of himself:—

"He was a man of great prudence as well as zeal. His sails and ballast were *exactly* proportionate to each other. He could not be dull and sluggish in the service of such a Master as God is, but he did never run before he was sent. He would always stand still to hear his full errand, and would stay to understand perfectly all his Master's will; which being made known to him, he then was most bold and courageous in delivering of his message:

'A wise man loves, in matters great,
To stay and think deliberate.'

"His great prudence would not permit him to be rash, and his great zeal would not suffer him to be slow, negligent, or partial."

It was natural that the biographies of men so like himself, men animated by the same hopes, and serving the same Master, should be ever attractive reading to my father, and that he should

set up their plain and active piety as a contrast to what he conceived to be the vague and unsatisfactory sentimentalism of present times and particular parties. Give him the life, experience, and expressions of such men as Janeway and Fairclough, and some other equally little-known ministers of the past, and he was at home with them. These men had preceded him in earthly ministrations and heavenly rewards. These men had lived long before him, but were very much like him. These men had suffered similar trials with himself, and achieved similar triumphs. They had walked through the Valley of Shadow before him, and he delighted to hear their expressions of peace or of joy when there, anticipating the time when he himself must pass through the same valley, and hoping in some measure to endure pain, to praise God, and to know Christ as they did on the bed of death. John Janeway's dying expressions seemed, indeed, to be beyond his own hopes and expectations. They were astonishing for so young a man, and for so premature a departure. They always affected my father while listening to them, and the reader while reciting them. It was with deep emotion that he would read or hear such passages as these, containing the last exclamation of this extraordinary young saint:—

“Come, help me with praises, yet all is too little. Come, help me, all ye mighty and glorious angels, who are so well skilled in this heavenly work of praise. Praise Him all ye creatures upon earth. Let everything that hath being help me to praise God. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah! Praise is now my work, and I shall be engaged in this sweet work for ever. Bring the Bible, turn to David's psalms, and let us sing a psalm of praise. Come, let us lift our voices in the praises of the Most High. I will sing with you as long as my breath doth last, and when I have none, I shall do it better.”

“That,” my father would add, “is real death-bed triumph. I do not expect it. Few men have it. Let me only have peace!” And he had peace.

FAITH IN PREACHING was undoubtedly a distinguishing and abiding characteristic of Dr. Leifchild. It is sometimes said that no man succeeds in any profession without enthusiasm for it. Such enthusiasm this minister had for his profession in full measure. With him, preaching was the prime mover of all moral powers. It was the sun in his system, and round it all other luminaries revolved in due distances. It was the lever of Archimedes which should move the world; it had moved it, it should move it again.

But in all such conceptions there was one postulate—the preaching must be of the right order; it must be scriptural, pointed, practical, pathetic, and instinct with life. If I may employ a figure to express his views, he would demand that in order to succeed, preaching should have its root in the solid earth, its trunk logically erect, its branches, however divergent, all connected with the trunk, and their connexion clearly traceable; its leaves light enough to rustle under the breezes of fancy, yet all green and firmly adherent, and the entire tree permeated by a vigorous and vivifying sap. Plant such a tree in any populous place, and let but Heaven give the increase, then he was confident of its growth and beauty.

To render it successful, besides the actual ordering of the material of the sermon, careful and constant attention should be paid to its delivery. Preaching should be diligently studied as an art, and as the highest art. This was his often expressed and enforced conviction from the date of his student days. It has already been adverted to, and his publications on this subject leave us in no doubt about his opinions. “As to delivery,” said he, “abhor above all things a monotonous accent, a sameness of cadence, contracted in a great measure by an artificial manner of speaking and of constructing our sentences, but infallibly destructive of all interest. Every other impediment against enchaining the attention and enlisting the feelings of an audience has been overcome by genius and mental energy, or by warm and glowing piety, but this,

never. Vary your tones, as well as the length of your sentences, even to harshness—even to extravagance, rather than go on in that soft, regular, undulatory method which satiates the ear, dulls to weariness itself, and would prevent the rhetoric of an angel from making the least impression."

Again, "Be determined to be a *good preacher*. Nothing forbids, if there be the determination and a corresponding continuity of effort. Let all your powers be tasked and put in requisition. Vary your methods to attain your end, and be deterred by no discouragements or failures in the prosecution of your object."*

It was in vain that any objector to his claim for the supremacy of preaching pointed to the increased and hostile power of other popular agencies. If it were affirmed that while preaching had not greatly advanced, the press, which in his early days was an infant, had now become a giant, and even a Briareus,—he acknowledged the grasp of its hundred hands, yet believed that preaching too might grow into a Briareus. Why should it not? Was it not a divine ordinance? Had it not accomplished the greatest purposes, won the noblest trophies, and hitherto fulfilled what Heaven had determined? If so, why should it not do yet more? He saw no reason for its impotence, and no autumn of its decadence. If there really were at present an autumn, there would afterwards be a spring. He might not live to see that spring, but it would certainly bud and blossom. If many things perished in the intervening winter, let them perish; the spring would renew others, and revive all that was worth reviving.

Holding such views, he was rather intolerant of whatever might be supposed to invade and invalidate the true province of the pulpit. In subsidiary modes of attraction he had little faith. Without power in the pulpit, they were sorry expedients; with pulpit power they were unnecessary. Regarding some extraneous

* The Good Minister of Jesus Christ; a Charge to the Rev. E. T. Prust. 1830.

exhibitions, in his later years, with no favour, he was decided in denouncing them, at least in private. Tea-meetings within sacred precincts he thought to be only tolerable; but "Dissolving Views" were to him an abomination. If the minister were a real preacher, my father thought he had no need to be a showman; and if not a real preacher, that he might as well be only a showman. What he objected to, was not a phantasmagoria in itself—for no man could enjoy it more—but the phantasmagoria below the pulpit, or near it. In the pulpit and the pew he "put away childish things."

It is to be understood that in these passages I am merely representing his unrestrained remarks in private. He was far too tender of his brethren's influence ever to say anything in public which might lower them in the estimation of their people; especially where such observations might be suspected to bear an individual reference. He did not expose ministers personally and publicly by way of improving them.

In the latest years of his life, when the power of the pulpit was for him a mere reminiscence, it did not fail to interest him still, and to occupy a large space in his thoughts.

"Oh," exclaimed the aged preacher, "oh for a powerful ministry—one that should reach to the depths of our nature, and stir up all that is human within us. I would travel miles to listen to a minister who should arouse, enliven, and animate me by the sentiments he advanced, and his manner of advancing them, entering into them with a sympathy that flooded the whole soul with a tide of emotion." Again he said, "I can forgive a man almost anything if he has but roused my attention and warmed my heart with emotions and sensibilities of a religious nature. O, let men speak to me as if they were alive, and as if their voices told of their inward feeling."

Thus his whole interest lay in preaching. Like a retired soldier, he anxiously watched the warfare, criticised the order of the troops, grew animated at the charge, and became indignant

at defeat. If a younger minister came to converse with him, his conversation was like that of an old general, who again fought his battles, and again charged at the head of his troops. He gave valuable and pithy advice, encouraged those who were depressed in spirit, and not unfrequently stimulated those whom he considered sluggish or faulty. "Determine," he would exclaim, "to succeed. Say to yourself, 'I *will* be a preacher; nothing shall hinder me. By God's help they *shall* hear me.' If one style will not do, try another, only be sure to preach the truth. Don't murmur 'the fault is in the people.' There are always people to hear a man who can interest them. It all lies in that. If you can interest them, good; if not, good-bye to you!"

Then he would proceed to give examples. Mr. Brewer, of Birmingham, was a favourite one; because, having failed to attract people for some time by one mode of address, he studied and practised another, and succeeded. He would then describe his own laborious mode of study and preparation, and add: "You will never work as hard as I did. I used to get my sermon so thoroughly in my mind that nothing could put it out. It is useless for you to go into the pulpit with your sermon half in your mind and half in your manuscript. Get it well into your mind, and then fling away your papers. Never be a paper-preacher, or if you *must* read, read well. Read like Toller of Kettering. He had a tear in his voice."

His counsel to ministers on matters of practice in connexion with their pastoral conduct, and on their behaviour, was invaluable. It was in this respect that his great experience and age rendered him so worthy of attention. To his age and experience, also, was added an intimate knowledge of the workings of the human heart. He knew how many of a minister's difficulties arise from his unacquaintance with human nature, and his imprudence in not "ordering his conversation aright." In a system of purely popular government, like that of Congregationalism, there is free play for tempers which are

not amiable, and full opportunity for finding fault and intimating dislike. How to conduct himself prudently in circumstances of this kind, many an unhappy minister has but an imperfect idea. My father was, indeed, a father to all who were in such a condition, and who sought his advice. *They* knew how patiently he heard them, and how wisely he counselled them. None beside will ever know his kindness and his prudence in conferences with perplexed and disheartened pastors.

Still, every pathway, however divergent, ultimately brought the counsellor back to preaching. This was the keystone of the arch—the support of all. “If you can preach well, you may defy the deacons,” he would exclaim to any one who might complain of their disaffection; “if you cannot preach well, the deacons can defy you. Your main power lies in holding the people; and you will never hold them long unless by thoroughly good preaching. You may visit them and take tea with them every evening, if you like; that is pleasing in one way, but all in vain unless they feel you to be a man of power in the pulpit. The pulpit is the minister’s throne—he is king there!”

The unfortunate man who felt he could not be a king there would derive little encouragement from such exhortations; but there were others who went away inspired, and resolute to rule by the only rightful method. Some of these have told me that my father sent them back to their studies heartened and determined, and that they ascribe much of their subsequent prosperity to his counsel. If he thought any minister promising, and capable of becoming a superior preacher, he would do his utmost to serve him and introduce him to notice. The present pastor of a very prosperous church in one of our leading provincial cities thus alludes to this fact, in a letter addressed to me in 1861:—“I am glad to hear that your greatly-respected father is better. I have a vivid remembrance of the manly and generous manner in which he mentioned my name to a vacant church near London, more than twenty years ago. He did the same thing, in the

same manner, for so many, that probably he has forgotten the circumstance."

It is almost superfluous to add, that he admitted of no compromise between the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel and the current errors of the time, in relation to the mode of setting forth the truth. Manner, he believed, might be much improved, as well as style and elocution; but as to truth, that was to remain unchanged. Everything might be progressive but the truth itself. Men should study prevailing types of thought, and then they would teach truth more and more acceptably; but the principal tenets, the foundation on which apostles built, the great doctrines of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, regeneration by the power of God alone, justification by faith, sanctification by the Holy Spirit—these were not progressive, not modifiable truths, not subject to the caprices of men or time, or place or fashion. No; they were revealed from Heaven, and were inviolable. One might as well have attempted to change the fashion of his countenance as these articles of his creed.

In May, 1860, he penned for his private satisfaction some criticisms on a theological volume which had been brought under his notice. In these he decidedly objects to some of the author's opinions on cardinal points, and at the same time clearly expresses his own views. These, indeed, are only what they were through life; but this his latest written account of them possesses particular interest. It might be introduced here entire, but for its inseparable connexion with the volume criticised. The following passages, however, have a general bearing, and may interest all who have "like precious faith:"—

"I believe the motive which has led to these negations of the general principles of the Gospel of salvation, has been a desire to render preaching more acceptable, by freeing it from the apparent harshness of representing God as a Judge requiring satisfaction for the violation of His law, in the person of the transgressor or that of his surety, and the awfulness of the satisfaction rendered

by Christ in compliance with the will of His Father, who suggested that means of saving us out of His boundless compassion for our lost race. These, therefore, are left out, and the amiability of God as a Father, and the loveliness and beauty of Christ as a divine Teacher, are dwelt upon with all possible graces of thought and language, while the Scriptures are liberally quoted, as if the whole scheme had been taken in. Such representations are agreeable and attractive to a certain class of minds. How far they are adapted for conversion is quite another question. In the writings referred to as great authorities, I cannot find a single explicit declaration of the expiatory sufferings of Christ. Blessed Redeemer! is this what thou dost deserve from us?

“The great, wonderful, perfect, and comprehensive scheme of salvation, as I understand it, may be prevented from taking hold of the mind by a modified representation, thus making it more agreeable to the conceptions of natural reason; by employing other terms than those of Scripture, or else the terms of Scripture in a less definite and palpable sense. Unless there be great watchfulness against departure from the plain scriptural representations, the only true doctrines will be made to glide away, and will be superseded by others which may inflict fatal injuries on souls.

“For instance, the faith by which we are justified, instead of being considered as a simple act, by which the justifying righteousness of Christ, as *an object out of us*, is apprehended and applied, is made to mean such a vital apprehension of Christ as to bring life with it. It is made to consist in a union of the soul with Him, in virtue of which union it is made righteous, and we are absolved and saved on that ground. Such justification is a something wrought *in us*, and the whole glory is prevented from being given to the Christ *out of us*. This is a substitution of sanctification, or the holy life of a *sinful* person, for previous justification, and puts it altogether out of sight.

“Yet I have no fears for the true and full Gospel. The

declensions of some will call forth the zeal of others on its behalf. Its light will burn brighter and brighter, till it shall fill the whole world with the blaze of its glory.

“My glorying is in the whole of the Gospel revelation. It reveals to me the grandeur of God, His immaculate purity, inflexible justice, and inviolable truth, penetrating me with a profound awe and veneration, and even with fear and alarm, lest I should not be reinstated in God’s favour. It reveals to me the perfection of Christ’s sacrifice and obedience, restoring me to the divine complacency. My dread of God’s glorious majesty is now changed into adoring admiration and confidence, and I aspire to love Him for His love in originating the wonderful method for our escape from wrath, and for our blessedness in Christ. To me, eternity is thereby divested of its terrors. At death I shall go immediately to Christ, the Mediator and Redeemer, to be by Him introduced to the Majesty on high, for ever to celebrate His praises with the surrounding and enraptured host. But for this refuge, how could all the dread of death be rationally surmounted? Thousands have found this to be their refuge in the dying hour, and I myself have seen too many instances of this kind to doubt of the divine sufficiency of these views.”

In approaching the conclusion of the records of a life so good, some readers may be disposed to ask, “Had this man no imperfections? Had you no shadows together with all this light—no dark background to this saintly portraiture? In reply, if the admission will complete the truthfulness of this biography, I acknowledge that he had imperfections. Dr. Leifchild did not profess perfection, and had not attained it; nor shall it even be poetically sung—

“And e’en his failings leaned to virtue’s side.”

Yet, while they had not such a leaning, they were the offshoots of a noble tree, of a monarch of the forest. Of him it may be said, as it was said of another great man, “His errors were but

as some excrescences which grow upon those trees that are fit to build the palaces of kings." They were simply what might have been expected from the temperament previously delineated. They were characteristic rather than criminal, venial rather than mortal sins. They troubled neither the peace of the community nor that of the church, but only, and only occasionally, the peace of his house, where, venial though they were, they sometimes led to mortal inconvenience.

There is really nothing more to add concerning them. "In speaking of the dead," says one of the deceased's favourite authors, "fold up your discourse so handsomely as their virtues may be shown outwards, and their vices wrapt up in silence."* But in his own case this advice is quite unnecessary, for the most searching inquiry into his character could never discover anything of sufficient moment to require concealment. For the greater part of his long life he lived in the full light of public observation, and under the keen glance of critical inquisitiveness. A thousand eyes were ever upon him—a thousand ears were ever open to any dark rumour which malevolence might propagate. He knew too well that many waited for his halting, and he was proportionably vigilant and self-observant. He was more careful of his reputation than his health, and he would rather have lost a limb than his good name. That it might not be imperilled, he quietly bore with many impositions; that it might never be called in question, he declined to expose some who richly deserved exposure. He would often say, "A public man must be prepared to pay dearly for his position, and a minister more than other public men;" or, "A man who has no character to lose will always get the better of one who has;" or again, "I stand upon a pinnacle, and any vulgar fellow may throw stones at me, but I cannot return them."

* The Club: in a Dialogue between Father and Son. By James Puckle. 1718.

Under such exposure he always deemed it not only a cause for self-congratulation, but especially for grateful acknowledgment of divine protection, that he had been kept from "the strife of tongues" and the scandals of malignity, during about half a century of publicity. During all that period his life was an open book, which every one might read and every one might criticise. Compared with that of ordinary men, his character was as a clear crystal, which, being always held up to the light, immediately displayed the minutest flaw. Every practical sermon he preached became in effect a public challenge; every high and holy exhortation became a defiance to apt retort. No man could afford to preach as he did, in the Metropolis and to such multitudes, without presenting himself as an example, and offering his own life as a model. He was fully conscious that the very power and point of his practical applications reverted on himself. He well knew that the denunciation of secret sins creates secret enemies. Nevertheless, for year after year, in sermon after sermon, he effectively denounced secret sins and successfully defied secret enemies.

Such a character, then, can well afford to allow the candid confession of some few personal frailties. Yet, after all, what were they in the nobleness of a life so incorrupt? If his spirit was sometimes high, his will sometimes stubborn, his hand often lavish, even these private imperfections had their compensating public advantages. His high spirit maintained due respect from others; and though he mingled much and familiarly with the poor, and the poor-spirited who were not otherwise poor, no man ever took a liberty with him without repenting it, if sufficiently sensitive to a well-timed rebuke. His indomitable will, likewise, carried him through difficulties which might have overborne a weaker man. Of his too lavish hand, it may be said that it benefited others at the cost of himself and his own. The mischief, therefore, was always restrained within narrow limits, while the compensations were general and abundant.

It was particularly in his latest years of all, that affection towards him was privately put to the proof. It was then painful beyond conception to others, to watch the growing debility of that once powerful mind; painful to see the judgment weakening, while the will remained strong as in sturdiest manhood; though in relation to religious truth neither clear perception nor judgment ever failed. What else, however, can be looked for when man has passed beyond his fourscore years? These are the things to be dissociated from an unfading image, nor should they cast an immoveable shadow over the sunlit pathway of the past. No! fond memory turns only to a tomb where forgotten frailties are buried together with beloved dust.

As relates to father and son, let it be said, in concluding a long retrospect, that the many years we lived together now appear as if they had all been summers without winters. If there were occasional thunder-clouds, these are phenomena even of high summer, and they do not long hide the sun. Respect on the one hand, and confidence on the other, bound us together with links only less strong than those of natural and close kinship. On one side, the foundation was filial love, upon which was raised an enduring reverence for a noble character, and many manly virtues. On the other side, confidence was built upon knowledge and experience, upon intellectual intercourse and unreserved interchanges of thought. By these links we were intimately associated in life, nor even in death do we seem divided. After a manner mysterious to all but mourners, death appears to have added intensity to affection, and sanctity to sorrow. The character of the departed one now seems to be invested with peculiar solemnity, and I reverently review it in daily retrospect. Although his bodily form is no longer visible, his person seems to me to be spiritualized, and his mental influences are ever present. His familiar aphorisms are remembered and repeated, his pithy sayings are unforgotten, and his very tones of voice are still fondly treasured. Indeed, I

frequently detect myself indulging illusory anticipations of his advice and opinions. I have even unconsciously mused (strange as this may seem) on the manner with which he would listen to my reading of the very pages just penned. These musings, however, are purely personal, and though the mention of them may be pardoned, their further indulgence must be denied.

Yet one other and comprehensive remark on my father's character, I must still be allowed to make. It has often been imagined, if not often asserted, that it is better to listen to ministers than to live with them. How this may be in general, I know not; but with respect to one, I can pronounce a decided and well-founded opinion. I have for many years listened to that eminent minister, and during many years I resided with him, and I can truly say of him, as Sydney Smith said of Sir James Mackintosh, "Those who lived with him found they were gaining upon doubt, correcting errors, enlarging and strengthening the foundations of truth." Would that I could again listen to him as often, and again live with him as long! This, alas! cannot be;—yet let me check myself. Live with him I may and shall, if happily his own parting prophecy should be fulfilled—"Good-bye, my son, I *know* that I shall meet you in heaven!"

Such was the life, such were the labours, and such was the departure of a good and great man, who was abundantly honoured of God. How much of spiritual life he communicated, and to how many, the preceding pages have indicated, as far as could be ascertained. He himself always shrank from reckoning his spiritual offspring, lest he should be puffed up; but as one of his deacons, after careful examination (see p. 262) attributed no less a number than one thousand five hundred and fifty-nine registered converts to his ministry at Craven Chapel, it will probably be much within the truth if we allow somewhat less than a third part of this number for the results of the preceding twenty-three years of

his regular ministry. Thus, by a moderate calculation, he may be affirmed to have received into church-fellowship *two thousand converts*, as the acknowledged fruits of his own preaching. These were neither the hasty trophies of exciting meetings, nor gathered in the aggregate, but individual additions, only admitted to communion after careful inquiry and deliberate personal examination, so that the life of each new candidate for church-membership had been thoroughly scrutinized, and each one, with few exceptions, had, by written epistle, which was read to the church, distinctly assigned the reasons for his or her faith and hope. Investigation so searching, and safeguards so rigid, precluded, as far as human means could, the possibility of self-delusion or artful imposture, and the happy consequence was, that very few indeed of Dr. Leifchild's converts discredited him or themselves.

Beyond these two thousand or more examined and enrolled church members, there were the numerous instances of spiritual quickening which were the results of his temporary and casual ministrations, and of his earnest conversations, such as have been noticed as incidents in the main course of this biography. The number of these can only be left to conjecture, until the Great Day shall reveal all that has been accomplished by this one divinely prompted minister of the everlasting Gospel.

Surely it would have been an inexcusable omission if the memory of this man had not been honoured by such a literary memorial as the devoted toil of filial hands could raise. For no other man would the difficulties of constructing it have been willingly encountered; for no other would such toil have been patiently endured.

APPENDIX.

ANNOTATED LIST OF DR. LEIFCHILD'S PUBLICATIONS.

1. *The Salvation of all Infants.* A Sermon preached at Hornton-street Chapel, Kensington, August 19th, 1810. 8vo.
2. *The Evil and Danger of Fickleness in Religious Opinions.* A Sermon before the Monthly Association of Congregational Churches and Ministers, April 9th, 1812. Pp. 48. 8vo. 1812.
3. *Memoirs of the late Mr. John Leifchild, who died Dec. 13th, 1816.* 8vo. 1817.
4. *Christian Doctrines and Duties; or, the Minister's Preaching and the People's Practice.* A farewell Sermon, preached at Hornton-street, Kensington, on Sunday, Dec. 5th, 1824. 8vo. 1825.
5. *Observations on Providence, chiefly in relation to the Affairs of the Church.* Pp. 133. 12mo. London, 1823.

This work reached a second edition.

6. *The Christian Temper; or, Lectures on the Beatitudes.* Second edition. Pp. 311. 8vo. 1822.

It consists of nine sermons on our Lord's discourse on the mountain. (Matthew v. 1-12.) One of the author's best volumes, as respects matter and style.

7. *A Christian Antidote to Unreasonable Fears at the Present Crisis.* In reply to the second printed Speech of the Rev. W. Thorp against Catholic Emancipation. Second edition. Pp. 48. 8vo. London, 1829.

The origin and character of this pamphlet have been sufficiently noticed in a preceding page.

8. *The Case of the Children of Religious Parents considered; and the appropriate Duties both of Parents and Children enforced.* Pp. 54. 12mo. London, 1827.

Marked by strong appeals to reason and emotion.

9. *A Help to the Private and Domestic Reading of the Holy Scriptures; comprising a Chronological Arrangement of every Chapter in the Bible; preceded by several concise Essays on the Style, Symbols, Inspiration, and Canon of both Testaments; and accompanied with an Outline of Jewish History, from the Termination of the Babylonish Captivity till the coming of Christ. To which is also added, an Explanatory List of important Words and Terms occurring in Holy Writ.* Second edition, considerably enlarged, remodelled and improved. Pp. 324. Small 8vo. 1831.

A very carefully prepared though small volume, which cost the author much time and pains. It was written at Bristol. Two editions were rapidly sold, and it was his life-long intention to prepare a new and remodelled edition. With this view he and his son toiled at intervals during several years, and a large mass of manuscript was accumulated. Late in life he printed a specimen of the intended volume, but old age and incapacity prevented any further procedure. Of all his publications he regarded this as the most extensively serviceable, and as likely, in its remodelled and enlarged form, to be of permanent value.

10. *The Good Minister of Jesus Christ.* A Charge delivered to the Rev. Edmund Thornton Prust, at his Ordination to the Pastoral Office in the New Independent Chapel, Northampton, on April 21st, 1830. Pp. 41. 8vo. London, 1830.

This contains several observations on the manner as well as the matter of preaching, and expresses the views and practice he continually enforced upon younger brethren.

11. *The Shaking of the Nations, and the Corresponding Duties of Christians; a Sermon preached at Craven Chapel, Regent-street, on Nov. 18th, 1831.* With an Appendix, containing an account of some extraordinary instances of Enthusiasm and Fanaticism in different ages of the Church. Pp. 66. 8vo. London, 1832.

A long and well-prepared sermon on Hebrews xii. 26, 27. Many passages are applicable to the recent and present state of the affairs of European nations. There is in this pamphlet a greater boldness of tone, and a firmer grasp of the true principles of "freedom, liberty and independence," with relation to politics and religion, than in any other of his publications. The appendix is of itself a pamphlet, and is replete with curious information on false prophets and fanatics. The author was very careful to enlighten

his readers, and, as a minister, his congregation, on the distinction between fanatical enthusiasm and true Christian zeal.

12. *Sermons: being a Second Edition of Abbreviated Discourses on Various Subjects.* Pp. 371. (First edition, 1833). 8vo. London, 1835.

These sermons were printed nearly as they were delivered from the pulpit. They are fifteen in number, and comprehend fair specimens of the author's ordinary discourses at Craven Chapel. One of them has been referred to in this volume; others, as the fourth, on "St. Paul's Raptures and Thorn in the Flesh;" the eighth, on "The Divine Superintendence of Human Affairs," and the last, on "The five points of Universal Charity," are perhaps of superior value, and certainly in their perusal (though abbreviated) vividly recall the preacher to the hearer.

13. *Memoir of the Rev. Joseph Hughes, A.M., one of the Secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society* Pp. 498. 8vo. London, 1835.

This is the largest, though not the most laborious, of the author's volumes. He has left this note concerning it:—"I engaged in the arduous task of writing Mr. Hughes's life at the earnest request of his family, who determined it should be done by me. The correspondence in which this engaged me was most fatiguing, and looking over and sorting the papers formed a most troublesome task. I had no doubt, from all I could discover, that the suggestion which originated the Bible Society came from Mr. Hughes, though several contended for the honour of sharing it with him. I have given, in this work, an account of his death as I witnessed it. Though I was handsomely remunerated by the publisher of the volume, no consideration has ever induced me to attempt a similar work again."

Many interesting particulars respecting the origination and the early history of the Bible Society may be found in this volume.

14. *The Duty of a Christian People in Reference to the present Crisis.* A Sermon preached at Craven Chapel, March 24, 1847. To which is added, An Account of a converted Jew, who was the same day publicly consecrated to God by the ordinance of Christian Baptism, with the Confession of his Faith. 8vo. Pp. 38. Second edition.

15. *The Evangelist.* A monthly periodical commenced in 1837.

Of this, four volumes were edited by the Rev. J. Leifchild and the Rev. Dr. Redford (of Worcester). My father, the originator of this periodical, thus explains its object and fate:—"I and Dr. Redford became joint editors of a monthly publication entitled 'The Evangelist.' It consisted of short sermons, original, and also from celebrated preachers; essays on preaching and on pulpit services in general; criticisms, and anecdotes of preachers

and preaching, with various other matter of a religious nature. It was much valued by ministers, but it was not sufficiently advertised, nor very extensively known. After a year or two, therefore, we discontinued it, and the early numbers were soon out of print. Inquiries were then made for them in all directions. Sermons by John Foster, Robert Hall, Joseph Hughes, and others, which were not elsewhere published, were contained in it, with some valuable essays by Dr. Redford, and other brethren of note.

The writer has four complete volumes of "*The Evangelist*" in his library. Some additional numbers were afterwards published, but not under Dr. Leifchild's superintendence.

16. *Union without Uniformity.* An Account of the Service held at Craven Chapel in 1843 to promote Christian Union, and which led to the formation of the Evangelical Alliance.

17. *Original Hymns.* Adapted to general worship and special occasions by various Authors, and edited by the Rev. J. Leifchild, D.D. 12mo. London, 1843.

The collection and preparation of the 370 hymns contained in this volume occupied my father and his assistants for some considerable time. In the preface he says:—"The great majority of the hymns were composed by individuals of various denominations, expressly for the present volume. The authors or proprietors of the remainder have assured the compiler that though some of them have had a restricted publication, yet, with rare exceptions, they have never been in use for congregational singing. To most persons, therefore, they will appear in this form for the first time." Such is the sense in which the editor explained his use of the term "*Original Hymns*."

This volume was stereotyped and continued in use, together with Dr. Watts's hymn-book, during my father's ministry at Craven Chapel. Concerning the high poetical merits of many (if not all) of the hymns there can be no question. Indeed, an eminent poet, the late James Montgomery, of Sheffield, wrote as follows:—"I have been greatly pleased to find in your volume more new hymns which deserve to become old ones, by long use in congregations and families, than I have before met with in any modern collection; and the average merit of the pieces, is above the ordinary standard."

18. (1.) A Sermon preached on behalf of the St. Pancras Auxiliary of the London City Mission, at King's-cross Chapel. 1849.

(2.) An Address on laying the Foundation-stone of a new Congregational Chapel and Schools in London. 1854.

19. *Christian Experience in its several Parts and Stages.* Pp. 313. 8vo. London, 1852.

A second edition afterwards appeared in a smaller form.

This volume contains eleven sermons on the principal stages of spiritual life. They are more mature in thought and equable in manner than the author's preceding volumes, and display, as would be expected, deep religious sentiment subjectively.

20. *The Christian Emigrant*, containing Observations on different Countries, and various natural Objects, with short Essays, Discourses, Meditations, and Prayers. Pp. 260.

The first part of the work was written by myself, and the remainder by my father. It was found to be extensively useful.

21. *The Sabbath-day Book*; or Scriptural Meditations for every Lord's Day in the year. 8vo. Pp. 357. (No date—Tract Society).

Chiefly designed for persons detained in their own abodes on the Lord's day. "These meditations are not parts of sermons on the respective texts, but such sermons condensed and recast in a form better adapted for self-reflection, or the meditation of a select class. Whilst the author has dwelt on fundamental truths, he has abstained from controversial points, and carefully avoided, to the utmost of his power, everything sectarian, or favouring the peculiarities by which any of the classes of Christians who are termed orthodox are distinguished.

"May the catholic spirit of the apostolic benediction be traced through all these pages, and promoted by them. 'Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.'"—(Preface.)

22. *The Life and Labours of the Good Minister of Jesus Christ*, being the Funeral Sermon preached at Union Chapel, Islington, for the Rev. Thomas Lewis (Minister of the same), on Sabbath morning, March 7th, 1852.

Mr. Lewis, who died Feb. 29th, 1852, aged 75, was an old friend of Dr. Leifchild, and this sermon pays a just tribute to his ministerial character, and many virtues. On his death-bed he said:—"Hear my dying testimony—Goodness and mercy have followed me all my days."

23. Six minor publications may be here classed together:—(1.) *Counsels to a Young Minister*, in relation to his Studies, Preaching, and Pastoral Duties. (2.) *Christian Union*; or, Practical Suggestions for promoting Brotherly Love amongst Evangelical Protestants. (3.) *Directions for the Right and Profitable Reading of the Scriptures*. (4.) *The Plain Christian guarded against Popular Errors respecting the Scriptures*. (5.) *Pastoral Address* to the Members of the Church at Craven Chapel. July, 1845. (6.) *Observations on Sacramental Communion*, in sequence to "The Memorial of Jesus," by his son. 1855. Pp. 64.

24. Three sermons may also be classed together :—(1.) *Piety the best Patriotism* ; a funeral sermon for Thomas Wilson, Esq., the friend who introduced him to Hoxton Academy. This sermon was preached at the request of his widow and son. (2.) *Youth pleasing God* ; (and (3.) *The Christian Race* ; the two latter being sermons to young people, preached at Craven Chapel.
25. *The Minister's Helpmeet*. A Memoir of Mrs. Elizabeth Leifchild, wife of the Rev. Dr. Leifchild, by her husband. Second edition.
26. *On Preaching and Preachers*. The Inaugural Address at the opening of the new Baptist College, Regent's Park, Oct. 16th, 1856, with an Appendix. Pp. 82. 12mo. London, 1857.
27. *A Selection of Remarkable Facts* of a providential and religious character, illustrative and confirmatory of different portions of Scripture. Pp. 354. 8vo. London, 1862.

A very small edition of this volume was printed for subscribers only. It never was on sale, and not a copy is to be now had.

Although not of a literary character, it obtained unexpected and general approval. From many quarters the author received letters of thanks, and from very many persons requests for copies. After his death, and to the day of writing these lines, requests for copies have frequently been made.

Dr. Leifchild was making preparations for the general publication of this volume, with additional facts, but illness and death prevented the accomplishment of his purpose.

Several most interesting incidents might be related respecting the peculiar acceptance and usefulness of this, the author's last book, but they must be reserved.

A number of sermons by Dr. Leifchild were reported in "The Pulpit," and other periodicals of a like character, though generally without his consent. He himself left a series of written sermons in a state prepared for publication.



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